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Fac-simile of the Title Page to Haoukewchuen, or the Fortunate Union.

THE

FORTUNATE UNION,

A ROMANCE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE ORIGINAL,

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A CHINESE TRAGEDY.

By JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, F.R.S.
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, AND OF THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEE, &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LONDON:
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TO

SIR GEORGE THOMAS STAUNTON, BART.

LL.D. F.R.S.

&c. &c. &c.

THIS VERSION OF A WORK,

WHICH HE HAS ALREADY PERUSED IN THE ORIGINAL,

IS WITH MUCH ESTEEM INSCRIBED,

BY HIS VERY FAITHFUL

FRIEND AND SERVANT,

THE TRANSLATOR.

PREFACE.

THE following translation was the amusement of some leisure hours in the country which it describes. The perusal of the original work, entitled Haoukewchuen, or 'A tale of the fortunate, or appropriate union,' had impressed the translator with a good opinion of its merits; and, after finishing the two first chapters on trial, he was encouraged to proceed towards a complete version of the Romance, with the addition of such notes and explanations as his long personal acquaintance with the people might qualify him to afford. The illustrative parts have derived advantage from the able assistance of the Rev. Dr. MORRISON; while some botanical notes were the contributions of JOHN REEVES, Esq. of the East-India Company's service, F.R.S. and L.S. a gentleman well versed in the natural history of China.

The Haoukewchuen seems to relate to the period when the *Ming*, or last native dynasty, occupied the throne, previously to the Manchow Tartar conquest: but, with the exception of some

some changes in their dress and *coiffure*, the Chinese are at this moment, in every respect, the identical people which our work describes.—The very great number of typographical errors in the original, almost inseparable from the mode in which their books are printed,* were, in the first instance, carefully revised and corrected by a competent native.

It is nearly seventy years since Dr. Hugh Percy, Bishop of Dromore, edited from a manuscript, partly English and partly Portuguese, and dated more than a century ago, what was little better than a copious abstract of our romance, and without the poetical passages, under the title of the 'Pleasing History.' In this (commencing, it will be perceived, with the very title), much was mistranslated, much interpolated, and a great deal omitted altogether. One notable instance of omission is the heroine's visit to the tombs and the pavilion, in the fourth chapter. Any Chinese scholar who thought it worth his while to compare the 'Pleasing History,' with the Haoukew-chuen,

* It is scarcely necessary to mention that each page is stereotyped on a block of fine-grained wood;—any slip of the carver's instrument is therefore frequently left uncorrected, as the correction involves, either the insertion of a new piece of wood, or the commencement *ab initio* of a new block.

chuen, could not fix upon a better portion of the work than the five memorials in the seventeenth chapter of the original.* These, in the Chinese, are excellent specimens of composition in that particular line, but in the misnamed version they have scarcely been attempted. The 'Pleasing History' speaks of a penknife † among a people who have no pens—makes a delicate lady talk of "her enemies being sacrificed, and their flesh offered to appease her resentment"‡—represents the hero entering into debate with his attendant concerning his own marriage §—with many other the like instances. The most remarkable case, however, is where the Editor, misled by his manuscript, accuses the Chinese author of 'an affectation of modesty'—whereas, the original is so outrageously the *reverse*, that we could not do otherwise than suppress the passage altogether, towards the end of the third chapter. In justice, at the same time, to the Haoukewchuen, it must be observed that this passage, and another short one, are the only untranslateable specimens throughout the work.

But

* The real divisions of the romance are, without any adequate reason, confounded in the 'Pleasing History.'

† Pleas. Hist. vol. ii. p. 61. ‡ Vol. ii. p. 51. § Vol. ii. p. 198.

But it would be absurd to detract from the merit of Dr. Percy's labours on account of the imperfection of his materials, or to deny that he most ably edited, and very correctly illustrated (except where his version misled him) what certainly was, at the time when it appeared, by far the best picture of Chinese manners and society that we possessed. He was naturally puzzled by some parts of his manuscript, and expresses his surprise in notes at a number of incongruities, which, on a reference to the original, are not found to exist.

In the Haoukewchuen we see the most singular people on earth, (self-insulated as they are from all the rest of the world), pourtrayed by a native hand in almost every variety and condition of human life.

Quicquid agunt homines—votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus—nostri est farrago libelli.

The interest and bustle of the scene, the spirit of the dialogue, the strong delineation and strict keeping of all the characters, joined to the *generally* excellent moral that is conveyed throughout, may serve to impress us with no unfavourable sentiments in regard to Chinese taste. The story commences with an act of generous devotion on the part of the hero, and the gratitude of the person whom he obliges

obliges becomes the ultimate occasion of his own triumph over the combinations of his enemies. The profligate, the malicious, and the base, when they have exhausted all the resources of ingenuity, meet with their just reward;—while rectitude, prudence, and courage carry their possessors not only unharmed, but glorious, through every trial. In the rival is exactly pourtrayed the reckless audacity of a young minion of wealth and power:—and the low devices of the uncle, 'spite of the craftiness of the fox, and the slipperiness of the fish (to both of which he is compared) serve but to multiply his mortifications and defeats.

It may be proper to observe, that in the hero and heroine are accurately described the principles of the Confucian sect of philosophy,—a sect which in its professed admiration of virtue, and in its high tone of self-sufficiency and pride, assimilates somewhat to the ancient Stoics. Many of the precepts which the disciples of Confucius are in the habit of repeating, cannot be surpassed in wisdom and practical excellence. They talk of 'treating other men according to the treatment which you would desire at their hands'—of 'guarding the *thoughts*,' as the sources of action, &c.;—but in common with every other scheme of doctrines merely human,

human, theirs exhibits much that is exceptionable both in principle and practice. Revenge, or the *lex talionis,* was in some cases enjoined by Confucius himself,—and *humility* (though this virtue seems to have been inculcated by their sage) is not a distinguishing trait of his disciples. Combining within their own body all the talent and intellect of the state, and certainly almost all the virtue that is to be found in the country, they look with great contempt on the superstitious votaries of Buddha and Laoukeun. The translator received the following very just opinion of them from a gentleman whom thirty years residence at Peking had qualified to judge. "The lettered class possessing a great ascendancy over the people, the policy of each successive dynasty has fully availed itself of their services:—and it is without doubt to this concentration of talent that China owes her wealth, her peace, and her prosperity."

As we often find in our own favourite fictions, a number of the names in similar Chinese works have a reference to the characters of those who bear them. Thus the hero of the Fortunate Union is named from *iron* (quasi Ironside); the heroine is *pingsin,* 'icy-hearted;' —a term, however, which in her country means *chaste,* and not what we should call *cold hearted,*

ed. Her father's designation literally means 'dwelling in singleness of purpose,' which sufficiently expresses his inflexible character—and so of many other appellatives. The individual personages are occasionally known under different names. In our translation, however, it has been thought advisable to adhere to *one only for each*, as a means of preventing perplexity, and avoiding the unnecessary multiplication of ill-looking and worse-sounding exotic words. The use, too, of those copulatives disjunctive, called hyphens, has been forborne, as they serve rather to separate than unite the syllables of names, which by the Chinese are pronounced as much like single words, as any polysyllables in European speech. In regard to titles of honour, the translator was obliged to make use of equivalents from our own language. *Laouyay*, the ordinary address of a magistrate in China, is sufficiently expressed by our common term 'worship;'—and the Chinese title *Tajin* (literally *magnate*) is pretty nearly rendered by 'lordship' or 'excellency.' The higher terms of respect, being less familiar and vulgar, may be occasionally used with a sparing hand;—but to tack such household appendages as 'mistress' and 'miss' to foreign names like the Chinese, can only be attended with

with a ridiculous effect, and certainly does not convey a just impression of the original.

The 'Fortunate Union' may be considered as a more faithful picture of Chinese manners, inasmuch as the hero espouses but *one wife*. It is not strictly true that their laws sanction *polygamy*, though they permit *concubinage*. A Chinese can have but one *Tse* or wife, properly so called, who is distinguished by a title, espoused with ceremonies, and chosen from a rank of life, totally different from his *Tsëĕ*, or handmaids, of whom he may have as many or as few as he pleases; and though the offspring of the latter possess many of the rights of legitimacy, (ranking however after the children of the wife,) this circumstance makes little difference as to the truth of the position. Even in the present romance, the profligate rival aims at effecting his union with the heroine, only by setting aside his previous marriage with her cousin as informal. Any Chinese fiction, therefore, (and of these there are many,) which describes a man espousing two wives, is in this respect no truer a picture of existing manners, than in respect to any other silly or amusing extravagance which it may happen to contain. These observations are not hastily made, being the result of careful examination and enquiry, and

derived

derived in China from native authorities; and the present work affords sufficient corroboration, were any required. The resolution of the scholar Hanyuen to suffer death, rather than allow his daughter to be degraded to the rank of a handmaid, even to a noble; and the attempts of the same noble, towards the conclusion of the story, to espouse the heroine Shueypingsin as his wife, *because* he had just lost his former spouse, afford abundant confirmation. In fact, the wife is of equal rank with her husband by birth, and espoused with regular marriage ceremonies; possessing, moreover, certain legal rights, such as they are:—the handmaid is bought for money, and received into the house nearly like any other domestic. The principle on which Chinese law and custom admit the offspring of concubinage to legitimate rights is obvious—the importance which attaches in that country to the securing of male descendants. It is plain that the *Tse* and the *Tsëĕ* stand to each other in very much the same relation as the Sarah and the Hagar of the Old Testament, and therefore the common expression *first* and *second wife*, which the translator himself has used on former occasions, in imitation of his predecessors, is hardly correct.

The reader will observe many remarkable points

points of resemblance between the 'Fortunate Union' and our own novels and romances at the present day. Every chapter is headed by a few verses bearing some relation to its contents, and appropriate lines are occasionally introduced as embellishments to the story. Care has been taken to give a correct version of these poetical passages, as well as to explain the remote allusions which they frequently contain. A prose translation of poetry is confessedly objectionable, and rhyme sometimes imposes trammels which may interfere with the strictness of the sense. A middle course was therefore adopted, and recourse had to blank verse, which, while it admits all that is desirable on the score of fidelity, is less crabbed and uninviting than mere literal prose. That the student of Chinese, however, might be able to avail himself of the translation in reading the original, a perfectly literal prose version of the poetical passages has been printed as an Appendix at the end of the last volume. In these may be observed some of the principal points noticed in the translator's 'Treatise on the Poetry of the Chinese,'—particularly that of *parallelism*, which in numerous instances is as apparent as such a feature can be rendered out of the original language.

The

The scattered poetry of the Haoukewchuen does not comprise above four hundred lines in the aggregate: but to represent adequately the *meaning* of these in a literal, and their *spirit* in a metrical version, gave the translator nearly as much trouble as all the rest of the work. Except in some highly sustained dialogues, the prose parts convey the tone of ordinary conversation or narrative, and to any person daily accustomed to speak the language of the country, there is little more than the trouble of writing down the meaning.

Sufficient aids exist, even in Europe, for the elucidation of *prose* compositions; but until a dictionary of Chinese poetry (at present a great want) shall have been compiled, the subject must be considered as almost out of the reach of European scholars. The frequent and remote allusions, which in some measure constitute the beauty of their poetry, are hardly to be seized by those who are unacquainted with the most popular tales, traditions, or fancies of the Chinese, and, at the same time, unsupplied with all the means of original information. It is therefore, perhaps, unfortunate that Professor Remusat, of Paris, should have chosen for translation the novel of Yu-keaou-le, (or, as he writes it, Iu-kiao-li,) which is full

of verse. To notice a single instance at the commencement of the Fourteenth Chapter, he has mistaken the name of the fair and imprudent damsel Wunkeun (in allusion to one of the commonest stories in China,* and bearing an evident reference to the subject of the chapter) for the title of some male personage. Instead of giving the proper name, he translates the two words that compose it, and renders the same by "the Prince of letters;" a character and a sex the most unsuited to the runaway fair one, whom he, for the first time, dignifies with such a title. There is, however, nothing surprising in this,—and other instances might be noted, were it a gracious task to find fault, and were Chinese criticism likely to interest English readers. But it is singular that M. Remusat should have misunderstood the meaning of lines so simple as the following:

不是才名動天下
如何到處有逢迎

'Mais ce n'est pas le mérite et la renommée qui remuent le monde,
'Est-il bon de recevoir ainsi l'hospitalité en tous lieux?'

The very opposite is the sense of the original:

'If

* See note to Appendix, vol. ii. p. 251, *et passim.*

'If talent and reputation did not move (or affect) the whole empire,
'How could he every where have met with such a reception?'

There is much greater satisfaction, however, in bearing testimony to the more general correctness of the translation from the prose. In effective knowledge of the language, M. Remusat seems to be without a rival in France; and his tone and language, in speaking of his own works, or those of others, entitle his observations to respect. He does not, with an absurd and blind fury (the motive of which is obvious) decry those advantages which are inseparable from a residence in China itself:—advantages which have enabled Dr. Morrison to achieve his dictionary, that colossal labour of utility, which is an honour at once to himself and to his country,—and which has met with its due praise from competent judges. It is of the author of this dictionary that M. Klaproth, after declaring that the book is "*very troublesome in use*," and "*full of faults*," adds the following extraordinary observation:—"*If, indeed, he is really the author of the work which he has published.*"—But Dr. Morrison knows perfectly well how to estimate M. Klaproth's remarks.

Such

Such attacks might well remain unnoticed; and the translator himself has accordingly treated with invariable disregard the liberal observations and inuendos with which M. Klaproth (in his own peculiar style and language) has long thought it necessary to favour him—more especially as M. de Sorsum and M. Remusat deemed it worth their while to edit in French those very translations* (trifles as they were) which excited our critic's irritability. But the resolution of the committee to reprint the Chinese tragedy in octavo at the end of the romance, affords him a convenient opportunity (without which he should have been silent) to notice briefly some extracts which he has read from M. Klaproth's observations upon that drama, and in so doing he craves the reader's pardon for being dull. Our critic finds fault with the name *Hanchenyu;* but had he a practical acquaintance with the people, he would have known that *Hanchenyu* and *Chenyu* are the appellations which the Chinese, (who are not fond of more than three syllables in a proper name) constantly apply to that person in their frequent repetitions of the story, whether in drawings,

* Concerning one of these M. Remusat observed, 'M. Davis, en le publiant, a donc rendu un véritable service aux amis de la littérature Asiatique.'

drawings, conversation, poetry, or prose. He seems to be unaware that they usually make use of a single syllable of foreign names, with the addition of some adjunct; and that, could he speak enough of the language to talk to a Chinese about *Hoo-han-ye-chen-yu*, he would not be much more intelligible than the lady who affects to be dumb in a certain well-known French comedy. It may seem tedious to dwell on such a subject;—but the translation itself disproves the insinuation, that the translator took the first syllable of the Tartar name "dans le sens de *s'appeler*." It says, "I *am* Han-chenyu," not "I am *called*," &c. The heroine Chaoukeun is also called *Mingfei* and *Wong-tseang*; but this would have been a miserable reason for lumbering our version with a string of harsh-sounding words, tending only to produce confusion, and revolt the reader: and whatever anachronisms (of little consequence in a work of imagination) the original may contain, the translation is quite in accordance with the popular Chinese version of the story. The only real oversight, in the case of Wei-keang, has been corrected in the present edition.

M. Klaproth has contrived to enliven so dull a topic by a little entertainment. "M. Davis traduit, *I met a maiden, daughter of one Wong-chang*,

chang, 'J'ai trouvé une demoiselle, fille d'UN Wang tchhang.' Mais Wang tchhang n'est pas *un titre;* c'est le nom propre, &c." Our critic may well be excused if he is not ONE perfect English scholar; but he should at least be able to understand what he pretends to condemn.

A real master of Chinese literature has pronounced, that "the dramatic works of the Chinese are certainly less calculated, on the whole, than their novels, to reward the labour of the translator."* So much has been given of the Sorrows of Hān, as appeared likely to be read or endured. It was thought that a plain and sufficient reason had been advanced for inserting only *some* of the operatic passages, of which père Premare, in his version of the "Orphan of Chaou," had before given *none*. M. Klaproth, however, hints as usual that this was (*peut-être*) because the translator did not understand them. Be it so;—but what curious reason will he next discover for so opposite a course, as the insertion of a double version, metrical and literal, of *all* the poetry in the ROMANCE?

* Sir George Staunton.

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THE

FORTUNATE UNION.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERO VISITS PEKING, AND TAKES PITY ON A LOVER IN DISTRESS.

Though broad th' expanse of earth, of hill and stream,
Beneath yon broader heaven—though countless years
Still follow years gone by—as rolls the tide
Of human life in endless ebb, how few
The worthies of our race!
* * * *
Asleep or wake, one object all absorbs
His mind—he yields to passion's force, and feels
Beauty's* soft sway—and did not adverse fate
Still thwart his hopes, their union were complete!

It is related that there lived during a former dynasty, in the city of Taming,† a young student, whose family name, with the addition of his personal appellation, was Teihchungyu, and his adopted title Tingseng. The features of this youth were so regular and perfect, as to resemble those of some beautiful woman, and

 gained

* In the original, the phrase "arched eyebrows," is a poetical term for female beauty.

† One of the principal cities of the chief province, in which Peking the capital, is situated.

gained for him, among his neighbours and acquaintance, the nickname of the "fair lady." An exterior thus graceful and pleasing might properly have been matched by a soft and yielding disposition; while that of Teihchungyu,* on the contrary, partook of the rigid inflexibility of iron itself. His impetuous and ardent temper readily betrayed him into acts of intemperate violence: nor was it an easy matter to appease him when once irritated. Some deemed it strange, that in his social dealings with the world, he would meet the rich and great with studied coldness and formality, and readily take offence at the slightest omission on their parts; while on the other hand, did he chance to fall in with any of his poor and humble acquaintance, he would regale them with wine, and entertain them by his conversation, passing the whole day in friendly intercourse, without either fatigue or distaste. He possessed, however, one very good quality: for when people in real distress applied to him, he relieved them at once, without regard to their rank or other pretensions; but as for those flatterers, who came merely to humour him with a view to exciting his favour, he would pretend not to hear them. Thus it proved, that while many were justly grateful to him for his benefits, none ever ventured to approach him without having some good title to his bounty.

His

* An allusion to the word *Teih*, signifying iron: most of the names in Chinese fictions have a reference to the characters of those who bear them.

His father, named Teihying, was of the highest literary order, a man of an upright and straightforward temper, who held a place in the Censorate, and was celebrated for his boldness in giving advice to the sovereign. The mother of Teihchungyu accompanied her husband to his office at court; but their son, because of his violent disposition, and the consequent chance of its involving them in trouble, was left at the family house in his native city. Possessed of great natural endowments, our hero made a proportionate progress in learning, and soon became superior to the generality of persons of his own age and rank. He passed his whole time in retirement, amusing himself with books, and indulging his taste for pleasure, not without wine, amidst flowers and willow groves, hills and streams.

He had reached the age of fifteen or sixteen, when his father and mother determined on chusing him a wife: but the youth himself urged objections. "I am naturally hard to please," said he; "the choice of a spouse is very different from that of a mere friend, who may be got rid of if he does not suit you; but once married, the union is for life, and should the selection prove to be a bad one, there is not much difference between the two evils of living together, or being divorced. On this account, I entreat that you will allow a little more time in a matter of such consequence." As there was reason in what he said, they complied with his wishes.

Thus it happened that he attained to nearly twenty years of age without marrying, or even thinking of marriage. About this time, as he was one day reading, and drinking in the intervals, he came suddenly upon the history of Pekan,* who fell a victim to the honesty with which he reproved his sovereign. "Such fidelity," thought the youth to himself, "is doubtless a noble virtue in a minister; yet, to deserve the highest praise, he should be able to preserve himself from destruction, at the same time that he arouses his master to a sense of his errors. Let the fervency of his zeal lead him to disregard consequences, he not only fails in his object, but provokes at once his sovereign's fury, and completes his own ruin; and when it comes to this, where is the use of his fidelity?"†

Having

* The last emperor of the *Shang* dynasty had a wife, famed for her sensuality, as well as for her influence over her husband. Various stories are related of the cruelty of this pair, whose vices had at length the natural effect of provoking rebellion among their subjects. One of the emperor's relations having ventured to reprove him, escaped the consequences of his temerity by counterfeiting madness: another, whose name was Pekan, was not so wise, or so fortunate. The cruel monarch ordered his heart to be taken out and brought to him for inspection, observing, with an inhuman jest, that he wished to know if the heart of a sage differed from those of other men. The tyrant was dethroned by Woowong, the founder of the next race. When reduced to despair, he arrayed himself in his splendour, and mounting a funeral pile, burnt himself to death like Sardanapalus. The Chinese annals place him 1130 years B. C.

† Tacitus more than once expresses a like sentiment: 'Obsequiumque ac modestiam, si industria ac vigor adsint, eo laudis excedere, quo plerique per abrupta, sed in nullum reipublicæ usum, ambitiosâ morte inclaruerunt.'—Vit. Agr. c. 42.

Having refreshed himself with another cup or two, Teihchungyu considered that his father was in a situation which exposed him to similar dangers, while the unbending disposition, for which he was so well known, was only the more likely to involve him in a similar fate. He became extremely uneasy on the subject, and began to wish himself at the capital, that he might assist his father with his advice. After passing a restless night, distracted and irresolute amidst a variety of projects, he rose with daylight the next morning, and giving the household in charge to a careful old domestic, ordered his horse and travelling furniture* to be prepared. Then desiring only his trusty attendant, Seaoutan, to follow him, he set out on a journey to Peking to see his father and mother.

> Strong is the sovereign's claim, e'en unto death,
> On his good subjects' service—nor less strong
> The claims primeval of paternity!
> Unnumber'd though the social links that bind
> Man to his fellow man, none may compete
> With the *five chief relations*.†

Teihchungyu travelled with all haste towards the capital: and at the expiration of two days, his anxiety to proceed occasioned his finding himself, on the approach of night, far from any regular resting-place, so that

* This generally consists of a quilt or mat to lie upon, and a hard pillow. The Chinese do not incommode themselves with a superfluity of baggage, and used to express their surprise at the large quantity belonging to the embassy of 1816.

† *Viz.* prince and subject, father and son, husband and wife, brothers among themselves, and friends reciprocally.

that he was obliged to strike into a path leading to a scattered village, where, indisposed to lose time in selecting a lodging, he dismounted at the door of the first house he came to. His boy was desired to hold the horse, while he went in and called. An old woman presently came out, and observing his scholar's dress, said, "I suppose, sir," you come from Peking to see the young student Weipei, and would have me shew you his house?" He told her that he knew no such person, but had lost his way, and was in search of a bed for the night. "Then sir," replied the woman, "you are welcome to what we can give you; but we are poor people, and you must excuse an indifferent lodging." He said that he should be glad of any thing she could let him have until the morning: so the boy was desired to bring in the travelling furniture, while the old woman found a shed for the horse, and shewing her guest into a little side-room, brought him some tea to drink.

After refreshing himself, Teihchungyu inquired of his hostess, what had made her so curious about the object of his coming to the village, and who that student might be, of whom she had spoken? "You seem to be ignorant, sir," replied the woman, "that this place was not originally called *Weitsun*,* but that many years since an inhabitant of that name attained to high honours, and his family became so numerous and

* The hamlet of Wei.

and flourishing, as to occupy the greater part of the neighbourhood and give their own name to it. They soon afterwards declined, and their wealth and numbers gradually diminished, until they were reduced to the meanest condition. Their fortune, however, at length took another turn, and one of the family, after reaching the age of sixteen or seventeen, attained to the rank of Bachelor in Letters. He chanced at Peking to become acquainted with a scholar of the same degree, who conceiving an affection for him on account of his youth and early attainments, contracted him to his own daughter. Their poverty was the occasion of the marriage being delayed for some years, and in the mean while a rich and powerful lord, happening to observe the beauty of the intended bride, was determined to obtain possession of her. The parents would on no account give their consent, and the great man, enraged thereat, made such a bad use of his power as to send a number of people to seize the lady and carry her off by force. Some person came hither to acquaint the student with his misfortune, and he hurried to Peking to make inquiries, but could learn no tidings of either his wife or her relations. He would then have presented a complaint, but could procure no witnesses to back him; besides which, his enemy was so powerful, that there seemed little chance of obtaining redress. This morning he returned home in despair, and after recounting his griefs to his mother, went out, as she apprehended, to drown himself. She flew to all her

her neighbours, and to my husband among the rest, entreating them to pursue him and prevent his intentions; but I know not if they have succeeded. Thus, sir, I was led to suppose on your arrival that you might be a friend come to see him."

She had hardly done speaking, when they heard a confused sound of voices in the road, and coming out of the house, perceived a number of people surrounding a young man in the dress of a student, who covered his face and wept. The old woman called out to her husband in the crowd to return home, telling him there was a guest in the house. Upon this he immediately left the throng, and perceiving Teihchungyu, asked his wife if that young gentleman was their guest?

"Yes," replied she, "he has lost his way, and wants a lodging for the night."

"If so," said the other, "why don't you go and prepare supper, instead of staring about here?"

"I was acquainting this gentleman," replied the old woman, "with the history of the young student, and as you are present, can you inform us how it happened that he could discover no traces of his bride, although she was carried off in broad daylight by such a number of persons?"

"There were plenty who could have informed him," replied the villager; "but his enemy is a powerful courtier, and few persons would be so rash as to incur danger by mentioning what did not concern them;

them; however," continued he, "though they had related every thing, it would have been of little use to the young gentleman."

"Alas, alas!" exclaimed the old woman, "I fear that his misfortunes will kill him!" and so saying she went into the house to prepare supper.

"How timorous and spiritless are you country people!" said Teihchungyu, smiling,—"though I cannot help thinking you must be mistaken on this subject, and talk at random."

The old man assured him that he himself, at least, was well-informed, and being asked where he got his information, replied, "Sir, you seem to be a stranger, quite unconnected with this affair,—I have therefore no objection to mentioning it before you: but let me ask, where would you suppose that the young lady had been concealed?"

"She must be lodged in the female apartments of the noble* who carried her off," said Teihchungyu.

"That can hardly be the case," replied the other, "since there is always somebody going in and out, and it would be difficult to keep the matter a secret; but they say that the emperor for some particular deserts bestowed on him a palace of retirement, sacred from

* It has been very ignorantly asserted, that the Chinese possess nothing like hereditary nobility. There are five grades of these (besides the descendants of Confucius), who enjoy hereditary rank to all intents and purposes: though official rank in China is certainly of more consequence than that derived from mere descent.

from all intrusion, wherein he might dwell and enjoy himself. A nephew of mine, who went to the city to sell forage, saw the young lady seized, and carried to this place."

"What then prevented his immediately acquainting the young man," said our hero, "that he might go and procure the liberation of his bride?"

"It was useless," replied the villager, "for I myself spoke to him very earnestly, but he despaired of doing any good." Being asked if he knew where this palace was situated, "Yes," continued he; "it is not much more than half a mile from one of the city gates; the place is well known to every one, but none dare enter it." By this time the old woman came to say that supper was ready: and when Teihchungyu had satisfied his hunger, he desired his page to prepare a bed for him to sleep.

After breakfast in the morning, he told Seaoutan to weigh out half a tael of silver for their host. The latter, as Teihchungyu was mounting his horse to depart, cautioned him, for fear of mischief, not to say a word at Peking of what had passed between them on the preceding evening. The youth desired him to set his mind at ease, for he should hardly talk of what did not concern him: and so taking leave of the old man, he soon found himself on the high road to the capital.

Vain are the crafty villain's wiles, most vain
Often, when vaunted most—disgrace, defeat,
Rush headlong in from quarters little fear'd!

Hearken

Hearken to counsel, friend, and when secure
You deem yourself from mortals' purblind eyes,
Think there's a heaven above, that surveys all!

Scarcely had he proceeded a mile on the journey, when he perceived at a short distance before him the young student, weeping aloud, and with every outward token of despair calling on heaven, and complaining of his fate. Teihchungyu no sooner discovered who he was, than he made all haste to gallop up, and dismounting from his horse, clapped him on the shoulder. "Friend," said he, "do not yield to despair,—your difficulties are not insuperable: I will use my endeavours, and feel confident of having your fair mistress restored to you."

The student looked up with surprise, and perceiving the stranger's imposing exterior, "Alas! sir," cried he, "I am but poor and mean, undeserving of the notice of such a person as yourself. I cannot guess how you should have learned who I am. Your kind consolations are entitled to my warmest thanks; but these misfortunes seem to be a judgment from heaven, and allowing you to be possessed of superhuman power, I fear you can do me no good!"

Our hero laughed, and exclaimed, "It is the mere sting of a bee! if I do not set it all to rights, you shall be at liberty to say that the age of achievements is past."

"Sir," said the other with increased surprise, "I fear the intensity of my grief has impaired my understanding,

standing, and I may have spoken disrespectfully in doubting the ability of one who now appears to me possessed of extraordinary goodness and power. But let me beg your name and title, that I may know and remember to whom I stand so much indebted."

"I will not tell you that just now," said the youth, "but pray let me know your own particular designation, and what your present plans are; for it is necessary that I should be informed."

The other acquainted him with his designation, and then added, "I should have been driven by my misery to seek death, had it not been for two reflections: first, that my mother must in such a case be left childless; secondly, that under the government, and almost in the presence of so divine an emperor, it seemed impossible that the wicked noble who robbed me of my betrothed wife could be allowed to persist in his violence and injustice. Last night, after some irresolution, I wrote a statement of my case, and was just now on my road to Peking, where, indifferent to my fate, I would have gone to all the various tribunals, and accused my enemy. I knew that his rank and opulence made him a very unequal opponent to myself, but the business had arrived at such a pitch as to put these considerations out of the question."

He then drew the document from his sleeve, and still weeping, requested Teihchungyu to peruse it, and judge of the extremity of his hardship. The youth

youth read the paper, and found that his father-in-law, named Hanyuen, was a scholar of the same degree with the student himself, and that the ravisher was Takwae, a noble of high rank. "Very well," said he to the other; "this statement is clear and well drawn up; but to be effectual, it must be submitted to the emperor's own inspection; if taken to the tribunals, the different officers will support each other; if you present it yourself to his majesty, that too will prove unavailing; but entrust it to my care, and I may perhaps find out a way to assist you."

The student bowed low. "Sir, your kindness towards me is like the influence of Spring on a dying tree.* But it is not fit that I remain idle while you are labouring for me—let me follow your horse's steps to Peking, where I shall be ready to obey your commands."

"No," said Teihchungyu, "were you to go with me, it might excite attention, and place your enemies on their guard; you had better return home, and in ten days hence, if I have any good news to communicate, you shall hear it."

"Your goodness, sir," replied the other, "surpasses the

* In Cowper's beautiful address to Yardley Oak, we have the same idea:

> "Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
> Proof not contemptible of what she can,
> Even where death predominates. The Spring
> Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force," &c.

the heavens and the earth! But alas, you labour in vain for an ill-fated wretch like myself!" and with that his tears began to flow afresh.

"What is there in the whole world," exclaimed Teihchungyu, "that a young man like yourself need despair of accomplishing? Take heart, then, and cease this childish mood."

The student thanked him gratefully, and our hero, putting the paper into his sleeve, and bidding the other a hasty adieu, mounted his horse and proceeded with his attendant towards the capital. The young man, overwhelmed with conflicting emotions, stood by the way-side and followed him with his eyes. The whole appeared like a dream, which he hardly dared to think was true, and yet would not willingly believe to be false. In this state he lingered until Teihchungyu and his horse vanished from his sight: and then, turning round, walked pensively towards his home.

No resting-place the troubled bosom finds,
Th' embitter'd soul in sighs must seek relief.
Say not, that tears to women's softer mood,
Or babes alone pertain—by grief opprest,
The sternest oft will weep.

The village was not above twelve or fifteen miles from Peking, and our hero travelled with such expedition as to arrive there by noon. He resolved to take the statement directly to his father, and consult with him on petitioning the emperor for a warrant to proceed against Takwae. On arriving at the private door

door of his father's house he observed, to his great surprise and concern, that not a single attendant was to be seen. Wondering what could be the matter, he dismounted in haste and entered the hall of audience, where none of the clerks or other officers were in waiting. Still more alarmed by these appearances, he hurried towards the inner apartments, which he found shut. He then called aloud to the people within, who instantly recognised his voice, and opening the doors, exclaimed as they met him: "Alas! sir, things have gone very ill; my lord has offended the emperor by an address, and just been thrown into prison!" They added, that he had come most opportunely, and urged his going immediately to consult with his mother.

Teihchungyu asked with the greatest surprise what this address could be; and without waiting for an answer, walked straight into the room where his mother was sitting. As soon as the latter saw him she caught hold of his sleeve, and exclaimed with tears, "My son, it is well that you are here! Your father, in his anxious solicitude to perform the part of a faithful minister, was constantly presenting memorials; and a misfortune has at length befallen him, which puts his life in some danger."

The young man was much alarmed by this intelligence; but seeing his mother in such distress, he could not but endeavour to offer her some consolation: so kneeling down, he entreated her to be composed: "Though

" Though this affair were as arduous as the heavens," said he, " we might still find out a remedy; tell me then, mother, what was the petition, and in what manner worded, thus fearfully to provoke the anger of the emperor?"

The lady raised him, and desiring that he would sit down by her side, proceeded to relate as follows. " Your father was returning from the audience a few days since, when he was stopped half way by an old man and his wife, who with dishevelled hair and torn garments stood before his horse's head, and cried out for justice. Being asked who they were, and what was the matter, the old man stated that he was a scholar, named Hanyuen, and that his daughter being already affianced, but not yet married, a powerful noble had heard of her beauty, and sent a peremptory message to demand her as his mistress. The father replied, that pledges had already passed between the betrothed, and that he would rather die than give his assent to such a proposal; adding at the same time some other expressions which exasperated the great man, who then made a vile use of his power, and sent a number of the wretches* in his pay to enter the house by force, and carry off the daughter. The father pursued and endeavoured to prevent them; but in so doing only exposed himself to be beaten and maltreated in a shocking manner. Your father was much moved by

* Literally ' vultures and dogs.'

by this detail of the outrage, and presently addressed a petition to the emperor, praying him to degrade and punish the ravisher. Had your father proceeded with due caution, he would, at the same time that he presented the address, have secured Hanyuen and his wife as witnesses: but exasperated feelings unhappily deprived him of his usual foresight. When his majesty's order was issued to the Criminal tribunal to subject the offender to trial and punishment, that wicked noble, being possessed of abundant wealth and resources, contrived to place the old man and his wife out of the way, and to secrete their daughter beyond the reach of inquiry; so that when the trial came on, there were no prosecutors. He then presented a memorial to the emperor, accusing your father of slandering a faithful minister and deceiving his sovereign, winning over at the same time to his cause the judges of the tribunal, who advised his majesty that your father should be degraded and punished. The emperor was highly offended, and issued an order for his imprisonment; and though some of his powerful friends would gladly have exerted themselves to save him, yet the want of accusers and witnesses in this case made it impossible—and alas! I fear that the worst still remains behind."

On hearing his mother's story, Teihchungyu felt perfectly relieved, and told her that she might set her mind at rest. "Any matter connected with the palace,"

observed he, " might have proved very serious: but as for Takwae, and his seizure of the scholar's daughter, 'tis but a trifle."

" That may be true," said the lady; " but still the parties are not forthcoming, and it amounts in appearance to the crime of deceiving the emperor."

" Had my father," replied he, " made use of false names and fictitious circumstances to implicate Takwae, such would have been the complexion of his offence; but Hanyuen is a person of literary rank, and his daughter being carried off in the sight of great numbers, it was nothing more than the duty of my father's office to take notice of the affair—much less a crime against his sovereign."

Finding that his mother still despaired of discovering the secreted parties, Teihchungyu observed, " that when robbers and malefactors, in spite of their various tricks and disguises, were discovered in the remotest districts, what difficulty could there be in finding this scholar and his family, who, oppressed and maltreated as they had been, were shut up within the very precincts of the court? Besides," added he, " I myself have all the necessary information respecting them."

His mother appeared scarcely to believe this: upon which he asked her reproachfully if she thought him capable of deceit? " Then," exclaimed she, with joy, " if such be really the case, hasten, as soon as you have refreshed yourself, to your father in prison, impart to him

him this intelligence, and put an end to his sorrow." So saying, the lady desired her attendants to prepare a repast for her son, and causing him to change his travelling dress, gave orders that a sufficient number of persons might be ready to attend him to the prison.

Teihchungyu, however, paused, and told them not to be in a hurry. He went into the library, and wrote out an address to the emperor; then requesting his mother to give him the seals of his father's office, he put the whole up, together with the young student's memorial, into his sleeve, and calling for his servants, proceeded towards the prison to visit his father.

'Tis fortitude's proud attribute and boast
In time of trial to be self-possest:
—When danger threatens, mind is most requir'd!
Did mere brute rage usurp the honours due
To nobler courage, long might *this* remain
Robb'd of its proper meed!

When Teihchungyu arrived at the prison, the officer in charge of it knew who he was, and received him with civility. " Your father is within," said he, leading him towards the interior, " you can go in and see him; and as you may wish for some private conversation I will not accompany you."

The youth thanked him, and entered the apartment, where he saw his father sitting up in a dignified manner, unencumbered with fetters. Having paid the customary respect, " Sir," said he, " I have been guilty

of great negligence in not coming sooner to wait upon and assist you."

The censor arose from his seat with surprise, and said, " I am here, in my proper character, as a faithful minister—what is the reason that I see you in this place, at a time when you should be attending to your studies at home ?"

" I heard," replied his son, " that your loyalty had involved you in trouble: how was it possible for me to remain at a distance ?"

Teihying paused.—" Your coming," said he, " was certainly an act of duty—I perceived there were abuses, and deemed it right to speak my mind: but whether I be listened to or not— whether I live or die—must remain with the emperor, and your presence can do me no good whatever."

" Sir," replied Teihchungyu, " it is doubtless the business of your station to speak your mind: but it is prudent, at the same sime, to select occasions, when remonstrance may be attended with effect. Those who without regarding such opportunities, satisfy themselves with the mere boldness of their interference, are like the inconsiderate mortals who, continually chasing the wind and catching at shadows, think to get themselves a name by the mere loudness of their outcries. Do such deserve the name of faithful and useful ministers, or is this the object of his majesty in instituting their office ?"

" When

" When I reported the affair," said Teihying sighing, " I had every reason to suppose there was sufficient evidence; nor was it possible to foresee the wiles which have been practised by that villain. When Hanyuen and his wife openly called on me for protection, I represented their case; and it was equally impossible to divine that when the Criminal tribunal had received orders to apprehend all persons concerned, the chief accusers should be secreted out of the reach of inquiry;—thus throwing all the responsibility on myself. Events have turned out in direct variance with my expectations: I may, therefore, be acquitted of the charge of 'persecuting the wind and catching at shadows,' no less than of a wish to deceive my sovereign."

" It is true," observed his son, " that we cannot foresee every contingency; but we should adopt all the precautions in our power. Instead, however, of dwelling on what is past, let us consult on a remedy for the evil, lest a further delay produce further mischief. As long as there is hope, sir, why should you lose your time in inactivity, while your enemies are plotting against you?"

" If I remain inactive, it proceeds from necessity; where can be the utility of exerting myself, as long as I have no means of tracing those people?"

" There are traces enough of them," said Teihchungyu, " but the Criminal tribunal favour Takwae, and remain inactive. You, sir, should obtain the emperor's express authority

authority to prosecute this case in person, and you will no doubt succeed."

" There would not be much difficulty in that," observed the censor;—" but if, after all, the people should not be discovered, it would only aggravate my own offence."

Teihchungyu then took occasion to inform him, that the place of concealment was known to himself; but as it was sacred from intrusion, the imperial permission must be obtained to enter it, and apprehend the parties.

His father grew impatient. " The Criminal court," exclaimed he, " have received orders in vain to find them; I myself have fruitlessly engaged the exertions of my friends in power; and do you, just arrived at the capital, pretend to know so much about it?—Go to, you are a prating, self-sufficient boy!"

Teihchungyu replied, that in a matter of life and death, it was quite impossible for him to be guilty of such levity; and then, looking round to see that nobody was within hearing, he recounted all that he had learned from the young student and the villager, presenting at the same time the student's memorial for his father's inspection.

Teihying was rejoiced at the perusal of the document. " This memorial," cried he, " will suffice to exculpate me, even though the people should not be discovered:—still, however, I cannot help suspecting that they are not secreted in that place."

His

His son observed, that as the palace was sacred from all intrusion, there could be no doubt whatever of its being the place of concealment.

" But when Takwae found his case growing desperate, would he not effect the death of these people, with a view to making himself secure?"

" He is sufficiently bad," answered Teihchungyu; " but I believe him to be nothing worse than a debauched libertine, who has abused his rank and power:— it does not follow that he is a murderer to boot. Besides, his attachment to the young woman's beauty would not let him give her up: and the security of his fortress, the connivance of the Criminal tribunal, and your being in prison, would all tend to make him feel secure. Think no more about that, sir, I beg."

" What you say is very true," observed his father; " and this is no time for scruples. Wait until I have written a petition, and in the meanwhile procure my seal from home, that I may present it directly."

" You need not take that trouble, sir," answered the youth, " for I have both the petition and the seal ready. If you approve this paper, it may go without any alteration." So saying, he presented the writing to his father, who opened and perused it as follows:

" The imprisoned Teihying, late inspector-general of Honan province, humbly addresses his imperial Majesty, to intreat that he may be furnished with authority for apprehending certain persons, and thereby clear himself

himself from imputed blame. To make use of the eyes and ears of his servants is the virtue of the sovereign: to offer up his poor advice is the duty of the minister. Hence a member of the Censorate is permitted to report what he hears, although such a representation, made without proof, has been the cause of my present disgrace.

" When the hereditary noble Takwae in open day carried off the daughter of the scholar Hanyuen, already betrothed, and thus offended against morality* and the ritual laws, I besought your Majesty to command that the Criminal tribunal should try that noble, with a view to vindicate the ritual laws and the cause of morality; but the wicked culprit, with diabolical artifice, secreted the complainant, that he might deceive heaven† (your Majesty), while the Criminal tribunal through improper motives connived at and favoured him, and converted me, your Majesty's adviser, into the guilty party. In the simpleness of my integrity, I could derive no profit from corruption: heaven† well knows the purity of my intentions: and it now only remains that I intreat my sacred master, in compassion to his servant who has suffered wrong, to issue an order, authorizing me to apprehend

* *Mingkeaou,* 'the famous doctrine' of Confucius—a system of moral philosophy, *Leŭ,* 'the ritual laws,'—of equal consequence among the Chinese.

† Here the word *t'hëen,* 'heaven,' is used in almost the same sentence with two different meanings; first, as the emperor—secondly, in its usual sense. This may serve to shew the idea which the Chinese entertain of their sovereign!

prehend the parties myself. Should the order arrive in the morning, and I fail to produce them before night, I will cheerfully await the severest punishment; but should they be forthcoming, then the discovery of their secretion will be a sufficient proof of the guilt and innocence of the respective parties. In the event of your Majesty's gracious command being issued, I intreat that it may be secret, to prevent Takwae again shifting the hiding-place—and that there may be no restriction to the extent of search, in order to complete the elucidation of the facts. With the greatest anxiety I await your Majesty's pleasure. Appended to this is the statement of the young scholar himself, in further evidence."

Teihying was much pleased with the address, which he pronounced to be clear and well written, and so agreeable with his own wishes, as to require no alteration. He folded it up, and delivered it to the governor of the prison, who received his directions to forward it to the proper office for receiving memorials. But to learn the result—to see the cage of jasper* broken, and the golden lock destroyed, let the reader proceed to the following chapter.

* This alludes to a familiar poetical couplet, which may be thus rendered:—

"The cage of jasper broken, the variegated phœnix flew out,
The golden lock destroyed, the dragon regained his liberty."

CHAPTER II.

"THE ATTACK ON THE TIGER'S DEN, AND THE SKILFUL RECOVERY OF THE PRIZE."

Occasions rise, when forms and rules prescrib'd
Must to a straighter course of action yield:
He,* whom the sculptur'd column could not blind,
Got praise—not so the over-scrupulous fool:
Search for the hare amidst her likeliest haunts,
And from the birds of prey a lesson learn
In seizing her—'twas thus our hero won
His prize; and bravely scorning vulgar forms,
Fashion'd his conduct as the case demanded.

In less than two days after the Censor had, in concurrence with his son's advice, presented the petition to the emperor, a secret reply came from his majesty to the prison. Teihying opened it in private, and found that it granted his request, and gave him authority to apprehend the ravisher. Much rejoiced at this, he proceeded to erect a table of incense, and to offer

* Allusion to the stories of Leying and Changknëen. The first of these, being in search of a female who had been forcibly carried off, ransacked in vain the mansion of her ravisher, until, suspecting that the wooden columns of the house might from their size be capable of concealing the object of his pursuit, he ordered them to be cut open, and in that manner discovered her. The second, being in virtue of his office about to apprehend a criminal of high rank, was so unadvised as to precede his visit to the house of the guilty person by the transmission of a ceremonial ticket, which had the effect of warning his victim of the danger, and causing his escape.

offer up thanks in front of the imperial order;* then carefully folding up the despatch, lest it should be seen, he began to consider what was best to be done.

"The emperor's permission," thought he, "is obtained; but should I be so unfortunate as to fail in apprehending the parties, I shall be in a dilemma." He consulted his son, and was for setting out forthwith.

"Softly, sir," said the youth;—"if you leave the prison at once, it will excite attention, and place our enemy on his guard. Wait here a while: let me precede you quietly, and break into his house; then when I have rescued the young woman and her parents, I will give you notice, that you may hasten thither on horseback, and proclaim the imperial order: this will be the safest course." His father nodded assent; and charging secresy on the officer of the prison, gave directions to his son to proceed with great caution.

Teihchungyu going straight home, informed his mother of the circumstances, and inquired for his brazen mace, weighing between twenty and thirty pounds, which he had formerly as a boy provided for his own exercise and amusement, being skilful in the use of his weapons, and robust withal. When called to Peking, his father had been apprehensive lest

* This is an indispensable ceremony, on receiving any writing from the emperor.

lest this weapon might be productive of mischief, and directed that his son should be deprived of it. The lady was therefore startled by his application at this time, and demanded with surprise for what purpose he required it?

"I am going," replied he, "to explore the tiger's den: and how shall I defend myself without arms?"

Persuaded he was right, she gave directions that it should be delivered to him, but with a caution that he used it only defensively. The youth then privately ordered that from ten to twenty active attendants should follow at a distance, and be ready at his need. He next called for wine, and refreshed himself; then putting on a military garb, in which he looked like some god, he took his brazen mace, and throwing an ordinary dress over all, mounted his white horse, being accompanied by a single attendant, and issued forth at the city gate without being remarked by any one.

On reaching the open road he gave his horse the rein, and soon observed, at some distance on the left hand, a very magnificent mansion, which he knew must be the place. He dismounted at once, and desiring his boy to hold the horse, proceeded cautiously to reconnoitre the premises. On either side of the entrance was erected an inscription* to the honour

* These are given in the original, consisting of four words each, and constituting one of those *parallelisms* of which the Chinese are so fond, but

honour of the noble inhabitant; and between them stood a triple portal of lofty dimensions, with this notification in golden letters on high: THE PALACE OF RETIREMENT; CONFERRED BY HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR. All three of the gates were fast shut.*

Seeing that he could not enter here, Teihchungyu bethought him that there must be a private door elsewhere; so following the course of a high wall, and turning the corner into a side lane, he perceived, about midway, a small gate with red folding-doors, also closed, and secured with a great padlock. The nobleman's insignia, which had been pasted crosswise over the doors, were torn and broken in consequence of these having been frequently opened; and on

but which cannot always be rendered very intelligible in English. Literally they are:

"Merit, reaching to the northern palace,
Dignity, subjecting the southern heaven!"

* Every considerable house, as well as every temple, has a gateway, consisting of one large folding-door in the centre, and a smaller one on either side. These last serve for ordinary occasions; while the first is thrown open for the reception of distinguished guests. The ornamental and honorary gateways in the middle of Chinese streets (sometimes improperly termed triumphal arches) are of a similar construction, though in these the doorways are never furnished with valvæ. Their beauty arises wholly from the painting and gilding, and not from the proportions, which are weak and flimsy. The roof, and what may be called the entablature, overweigh altogether the long and slender pillars beneath. As we refer the origin of columns in European architecture to the trunks of trees, tapering in proportion as they rise from the ground, so the Chinese pillars may be traced to the original use of the bamboo, which in its slender proportions, and nearly uniform diameter throughout the whole length, assimilates to their columns at present.

on looking through a crevice, he perceived that the bolts within were not fastened. On one side was pasted up this prohibition in large characters :

TAKE NOTICE, HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY HAS DECLARED THIS PLACE SACRED FROM INTRUSION; NONE, WHATEVER BE THEIR CONDITION, MAY APPROACH OR LOOK IN, WITHOUT INCURRING THE SEVEREST PENALTIES.

Two lodges withinside were filled with attendants, placed there as a guard. The youth perceiving this, would not alarm them yet; but returning to where his page led the horse, threw off his scholar's dress, and displayed the military garb underneath; then, seizing his mace, he got on horseback, and gave directions to Seaoutan to call up the attendants, adding, that if any persons were apprehended, he must instantly fly to his lord (in prison) with the intelligence.

Teihchungyu then galloped back to the small gate, and jumping off his horse, cried out aloud, " I have the imperial order to see the nobleman Takwae; go in instantly and announce me."

Four or five servants, in caps and dresses of ceremony, rushed out from the lodges, and in the midst of their confusion and alarm gave for answer, that " their lord was not there."

" Nonsense!" said the youth, with an exclamation of rage, " I know very well that he is. How dare ye, wretched slaves, act in opposition to the imperial order? Be sure you shall all be seized and put

put to death." The fellows looked at each other, but were so frightened that they could return no answer;—while he cried out in a louder tone, to ask what they meant by not opening the gate?

An old domestic at last ventured to speak. "Who durst open it when our master is absent? Besides, were the gate open, you would not presume to enter, in opposition to the emperor's prohibition!"

"Not presume to enter with his majesty's express warrant?" cried Teihchungyu in a rage; but if you will not open the gate, I must;" so lifting up his mace, he knocked off the padlock and staple at one stroke, and the doors immediately flew open. He strode in with a lofty air; while the servants, frightened at his appearance, made no attempt to stop him; but ran into the house in a body, exclaiming against this forcible entry.

When Takwae, in the height of his pride and power, first took possession of the daughter of Hanyuen, he looked upon the latter as a poor scholar who could obtain no redress for the outrage, little expecting that the censor Teihying would become his accuser to the emperor. On his majesty ordering the Criminal tribunal to investigate the matter, he had nothing left but to seize Hanyuen and his wife, and secrete them in his palace, to prevent their giving evidence. Afraid at first of their being discovered even there, he would have changed their hiding-place; but finding that the Criminal

Criminal tribunal befriended him, and instead of prosecuting the affair, threw Teihying into prison, he became quite at ease, and gave himself no farther concern on that score. Still apprehensive, however, that the young lady might seek to put an end to herself, rather than consent to his wishes, and her father and mother continuing inexorable, he treated them all handsomely for a while; until, provoked by their obstinacy, he had that very day seated himself in his hall, and ordered Hanyuen to be stripped, bound, and brought before him, thinking that blows might have the effect of making him comply.

"Though you do possess literary rank,"* said he, addressing his prisoner, "I have you very safe in this place, and can put you to death if I chuse. How shall such a poor wretch as you find any redress?"

"You may murder me if you please," replied Hanyuen, "but heaven is not to be insulted—nor the laws violated with impunity. You will have to repent your crime when it is too late; think a little, then, before you act."

"You call on me to think," exclaimed Takwae—why not consider a little for yourself. It certainly is no disgrace to a poor scholar to have a daughter in the family of a noble.† If you consent, you shall all of you be sumptuously clothed and fed, and well provided

* As a protection.

† That is, as a handmaid, not as his wife. See Preface.

provided for; this will be a good deal better than your present state of poverty."

"I am a poor scholar," replied Hanyuen; "but the adage says, 'better be honored among the little, than despised among the great.*' How shall a disciple of Confucius, from any sordid desire of wealth or luxury, disgrace the sacred religion of the emperor?"

Takwae now grew enraged, and desired his servants to begin their work with him—when behold four or five of those at the gate came rushing in, exclaiming, "Alas! my lord, a young man in a military dress, armed with a brazen mace, and proclaiming a warrant from the emperor, has, in defiance of our opposition, burst into the gate. We know not who he is; but he will be here presently, and we come to put you on your guard."

Takwae became almost stupified with fright when he heard this, and looking wildly about, would have retreated into an inner room; but Teihchungyu had already strode into the hall, and seeing him standing there, raised his hands and saluted him.

"My lord, I come on business from his majesty, and must speak with you. How is it that you oppose the imperial pleasure in refusing me admittance?"

Seeing that escape was out of the question, Takwae was obliged to come forward. "If you bring his majesty's order," said he, "why had not I previous

* Literally, 'Better precede a hen, than follow a cow.'

notice, that a table of incense might be prepared? —Why enter in this rude and boisterous manner?"

"The order was both secret and urgent," replied the youth, "and did not admit of being either divulged or delayed." Then advancing forward with his mace in his right hand, he seized fast hold of Takwae with his left. "I beg leave to ask, since this is a place conferred by the emperor for purposes of retirement and privacy, and *not* a court of justice, what poor man is this, whom you are stripping and beating?"

Conscious of his guilt in imprisoning the poor scholar, and hearing the imperial order so frequently repeated, Takwae became more and more frightened, and would gladly have made his escape: but, seized and detained as he was, it became necessary to put on a bold face. "These are my own domestics," said he, "under my own government; they have no concern with public justice." He then desired his people to take away the prisoner, under pretence of inquiring the imperial order; but Teihchungyu would not permit this; and Hanyuen cried aloud from the bottom of the hall, that "truly he was not a domestic of Takwae, but a poor scholar whom he had seized and imprisoned:" calling on the youth at the same time to save his life.

Teihchungyu felt rejoiced to hear that this was really

really Hanyuen; but affecting to be much astonished, "How came you to be concealed here," inquired he, "when the Criminal tribunal had an order to produce you?—This is a contempt of the emperor, and can hardly be expiated with life!"

The page had by this time come in, and his master made him a sign, which he presently understood. He ran out to summon the attendants in a body, and then galloped off to give information to the Censor in prison. The youth pointed out Hanyuen to his people, and told them to seize him, as he was the emperor's prisoner. "If you have been injured by Takwae," said he, addressing him, "what prevented your going for redress to the Criminal court, instead of lurking here, and conniving at his ill-conduct."

The poor man began to weep. "When my daughter," replied he, "was seized by the wicked ravisher, I did all in my power to procure redress: I presumed not to conceal myself from the Criminal tribunal; but, poor and helpless as I am, was carried off by a number of his creatures, as a sheep is seized by a tiger. My wife and I were immured in this place, and daily threatened with punishment, unless we consented to his demands. Our death awaited us, when you, brave sir, came as if from heaven to our rescue, and restored us to the light. Believe me that you found us here in a pitfall, and with no consent of our own."

" It would seem, then, that your wife and daughter are both here?" said Teihchungyu.

" Indeed, sir, they are," replied the other. " My unhappy wife is imprisoned in a back room; and my daughter, who I believe is confined in an upper story, looks daily to death as a refuge. I am even ignorant if she be dead or alive."

This account excited the high indignation of Teihchungyu, who made a sign to his people to carry Hanyuen to the back of the house in search of his wife and daughter. Takwae perceived that all was lost; but, enraged at seeing the men going into his private rooms, he became careless of consequences, and loudly vociferated to Teihchungyu, that this sanctuary, conferred by his majesty, and his hereditary rank, entitled him to the judgment of the emperor. " What man are you," cried he, " that dare thus armed to break into my doors on your own proper authority, and insult me thus grossly? Your own crime is sufficient to destroy you, without any interference with the concerns of others." So saying, he endeavoured to grapple with the youth, but failing in that, called on his servants to apprehend him.

His whole household had assembled at the commencement of the affair to assist their lord; but seeing him in the hands of Teihchungyu, who was armed, and withal of a formidable aspect, they had not ventured to come forward. Thus called upon, however,

however, some of the boldest advanced to seize the young man, who exclaimed: "Wretched slaves! whom would you dare to touch?" Then seizing Takwae by the middle, he swayed him round, and at one sweep, sent all the fellows tumbling over one another. His prisoner, being advanced in age, and moreover weak and enervated by luxury, could ill bear this rough treatment. He became sick, dizzy, and out of breath, and could only just wave his hand and cry out to his people, "Be quiet! be quiet!"

Takwae had some friends, nobles like himself, who being informed of what was going on, came directly to the spot, and seeing their acquaintance in such an awkward situation began to remonstrate with Teihchungyu. "Sir," said they, "be pleased to control your resentment awhile, and let us talk over the matter with you; but do not use force, and violate the dignity of a noble."

"This fellow," exclaimed the youth, "is a wretch who has deceived his sovereign, and infringed the laws—death is no punishment for him: what nobility or dignity is there in the case?"

"If there be any thing wrong in his conduct," said they again, "it should be properly investigated; but this kind of treatment cannot be agreeable with the emperor's wish."

"What you say is sufficiently reasonable in itself," replied Teihchungyu, "but you are ignorant of the circum-

circumstances: the atrocity of this man's conduct requires another mode of proceeding; the case is too urgent for the application of common rules."

"We are not acquainted," said they, "with the occasion which has called forth your prowess, and beg to ask whether you came hither to revenge some injury of your own, or to right some other person; when we know the facts, we shall be able to judge."

"I came for neither of those purposes," answered he, "but with the emperor's private order to apprehend criminals."

"Why not let us hear it read?" cried the others, "to remove all doubts?"

"That may readily be done," replied the youth; "let an altar of incense be quickly prepared."

Directions being given for this purpose, Takwae, who had in the mean while recovered his breath, observing that his partisans were numerous, began to assume courage. "Friends," exclaimed he, "do not listen to his nonsensical speeches; he is neither an authorized officer, nor any minister of the emperor: what pretensions has he to the imperial warrant? It is some associate of Hanyuen, who puts on this brave appearance to impose on us. Having impudently broken into this sanctuary, and assaulted a noble, his crime is too great to admit of his escaping us. I call on you to assist me. Send for the two magis-

magistrates of the district; tell them that a murderer has broken into my house in open day, and if they do not come to my assistance, they shall hear of it to-morrow."

His friends now began to think this was all true, and turning to Teihchungyu, "Such exploits as yours," said they, "might succeed in the dark on some poor man in a remote village; but here, and in broad daylight, it could hardly be expected. Where is the warrant for this violence—let it be read: if you cannot produce it, your crime is indeed heavy! You had better tell us your name, and the whole truth. Submit, and we may still do something for you; but if you think to escape us, you will scarcely succeed, even with wings."

Teihchungyu smiled at this. "What is there to prevent my going away now, if I pleased?" said he: "it will be time enough to go when the warrant is read, and the prisoners are secured."

"Then let it be read instantly," exclaimed the others.

"I am alone," said the youth, "and he has his friends on the spot: he will pervert the meaning, and I shall lose my labour: wait, then, until the magistrates arrive."

The others agreed that this was a fair arrangement, and a messenger being sent to hasten the magistrates,* they soon arrived, separately. When informed of the business,

* The Chefoo and Chehëen.

business, the superior officer replied that they must first see the warrant, and would then give their decision. The incense altar was prepared, and the chief magistrate called on the youth to read the paper, reminding him of his guilt if it should prove informal.

Before he could return an answer, the attendants announced that Teihying had alighted from his horse at the gate. Takwae, with ill-suppressed alarm, exclaimed, "When did he get out of prison?" just as his great enemy stalked in with dignity, holding up reverently in both hands a yellow cover which contained the warrant.* Advancing up to the altar of incense, he unfolded the imperial document; while his son took Takwae and made him kneel down in front, ordering the people at the same time to conduct Hanyuen to the bottom of the steps. He next addressed himself to those present, "The criminal noble Takwae having refused to surrender the prisoners, let the imperial warrant be read."

The Censor, perceiving that the two magistrates were present, addressed himself to the Chefoo. "Sir, your presence here is fortunate: be pleased to step up and read aloud this peremptory order from his majesty."

That officer immediately obeyed, and receiving the paper, proceeded to read it out as follows: while Teih-

* This was precisely the way in which the Viceroy of Canton delivered to Lord Amherst the emperor's letter to the Prince Regent; a yellow tent or tabernacle being prepared for the ceremony.

Teihying went and knelt down by the side of Takwae.*

"Teihying informs us that Takwae has seized and imprisoned Hanyuen, with his wife and daughter: what then prevented the Criminal tribunal from apprehending them? He is hereby authorized to secure those persons wherever they may be found, and let the tribunal judge and report to us. Should they not be forthcoming within three days, Teihying shall be severely punished for deceiving us."

When he had returned thanks for the imperial goodness, the Censor rose to pay his respects to the nobles who were present. These, however, had left the house as soon as they heard the order read; and the domestics, too, had quietly slunk off. The two magistrates only remained, and Takwae, seeing that his case was desperate, was obliged to humble himself before Teihying. "Sir," said he, "I am to blame, and hope that you will consider me with indulgence."

"I wish only," replied the Censor, "to prove clearly that I have not deceived his majesty—I shall then be satisfied. Hanyuen has declared that his wife and daughter are both here with himself: you had better send for them at once, and prevent our going in to search."

"No," said Takwae; "he came here of his own accord; his wife and daughter are not here."

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* This he did in acknowledgment of his still being under the emperor's displeasure; *i. e.* until he had cleared himself. It will be seen that he returns to prison as soon as he has executed the order.

" I will not contradict you," answered the other, " but we must obey the emperor's order and look for them." So saying, he directed his son and the rest to begin the search: which Takwae would gladly have prevented, but could not. None of his own family were in the house; but as soon as the party went in, they presently heard somebody weeping, and Hanyuen cried out to his daughter " to dry her tears, for her deliverance was at hand." His wife, too, who was in a side room, cried out to be released. They found the door locked, but Teihchungyu soon knocked it open with his mace, and the poor woman ran out, being, like her husband, in great apprehension for their daughter.

The latter, on hearing her father's voice, endeavoured to come down, but was prevented by several female attendants, who however immediately released her, when the mother made known the emperor's order. There were heaps of fine garments and jewels in the apartment, thrown on one side; and the young lady's face and dishevelled hair being shaded with a plain covering, she was conducted down to the hall, where the father, mother, and daughter, all three knelt down before the Censor, and thanked him gratefully for their deliverance.

" You need not thank me," replied he, " it proceeds entirely from the emperor's goodness: but your case is still before the Criminal court, who alone may

may decide it." Then turning to the second magistrate, "These three are his majesty's prisoners—it will be best for you to deliver them in person to the tribunal."

When that officer had conducted them away, the Censor observed to the superior magistrate, "that Takwae's rank entitled him to be treated with consideration, and he ought therefore to escort him to the proper tribunal in person; that as for himself, he lay still under the emperor's displeasure, and must return to prison." So saying, he mounted his horse, and departed in company with his son.

> Dragg'd from his lair, the savage tiger owns
> His hunter's prowess;—and the wily fox,
> Track'd in his flight, to arts superior yields.
> The pearl,* long-lost, to its glad owner given,
> Prov'd generous deeds, though rare, no fabled things.

We will not stop to relate the various arts of influence and bribery to which Takwae had recourse, with a view to escaping the punishment of his misdeeds; but proceed to observe, that the Censor, on his return to the prison, made out a clear statement of his successful proceedings, and sent it up to the emperor. On the following morning, this reply was received:

"Teih-

* *Hŏpoo Hëen*, in Canton province, was of old famous for its pearls. There was a pure and upright magistrate of that district, who, having received a valuable present of pearls from one of the inhabitants, said nothing at the time, but sent them back to the owner after his departure from the government of the place. "The return of the pearls to Hŏpoo Hëen," is become proverbial for any act of disinterestedness.

"Teihying, by discovering and apprehending the persons who were secreted, has proved the truth of his representation, and vindicated himself. Let him leave his confinement, and fill his former office for a time, until the decision of the Criminal tribunal be known: he may then be promoted. Respect this."

When he had returned thanks for the imperial bounty, the Censor proceeded to join his family, and was joyfully received by his wife and son.

The Criminal court in the meanwhile, though they would gladly have assisted Takwae, having already involved themselves on his account, were obliged to be cautious on the present occasion. The testimony of the three persons who had been seized and confined by that wicked noble was so irresistible, that they were compelled to pronounce him guilty; though at the end of their report to the emperor they added a few words in his favour. "Takwae," said they, "is some forty years of age, and it was from his anxiety alone to obtain an heir that he desired to possess the virtuous young woman in question. After taking her to his house, he made use of no criminal violence, but sought her consent by mere kindness and persuasion. The merits of his ancestors, too, may entitle him to indulgence: the final decision, however, must be pronounced by your majesty; it does not befit us, your ministers, to say more on the subject, but to await the imperial command with reve-

reverence." In two days the following answer was received:

"The noble Takwae, enjoying high hereditary rank, forgot his duty, and carried off the daughter of Hanyuen, betrothed to the scholar Weipei. This act was sufficiently unlawful; but when the Censor accused him to us, far from repenting of his former offence, he seized the parents of the young woman, and concealing them in the retreat which we had conferred on him, accused Teihying in return of having deceived us. His guilt is very atrocious, and being regularly proved against him, ought to be punished with degradation and death. But in consideration of the merits of his family, we cannot punish his crime as it deserves. Let him be confined to his palace for three years, and deprived of one year's revenue, which is to be given to Hanyuen in reparation of injuries sustained. As the latter shewed a brave determination in the defence of his principles, and proved himself a worthy disciple of the true doctrine,* let him be rewarded with an official situation, in which his merits will not be thrown away; and let his daughter, who maintained her virtue, be happily united with her betrothed lover. Teihying, in reward of the uprightness and determination of his conduct, which has given us high satisfaction, is promoted to be one of the chiefs of the

* Of Confucius.

the Censorate. Let the Criminal tribunal be amerced in three months' salary, for having unjustly favoured Takwae.—Respect this."

The whole of Peking was presently filled, on receipt of this edict, with the fame of Teihchungyu's exploit. Every one became anxious to see and be acquainted with him, and his visitors were pouring in from morning till night. The gratitude of Hanyuen and the young student, his son-in-law, of whom the first had obtained promotion, and the second a spouse, through the exertions of our hero, was boundless. They treated him as a superior, or a god! But the Censor became very uneasy on his son's account. "Heaven," said he to him, "will not allow mortals to be too proud and elated. Recollect that prosperity and adversity are very nearly allied;—it is but a short time since I was in prison—my fortune then seemed to be at the lowest ebb; but the emperor's goodness as suddenly restored me to the height of prosperity. The unprincipled Takwae can never forget the disgrace you have brought upon him, and will certainly seek revenge for the indignities you offered to his person. As for myself, I am the minister of the emperor, and entirely at his disposal: life and death, happiness and misery, I must equally accept at his hands: but you are free to rove whither you please;—better then retire from this dangerous place. The gradual extension of your fame, and intercourse

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in the metropolis, may expose you to the machinations of the envious and malicious. I advise you, therefore, under pretext of travelling for information, to retire to some distance. It will have the usual effect of magnifying your merits, as every thing which is imperfectly known, is more esteemed than that which is familiar and vulgar."*

"I myself, sir," replied his son, "am tired of so much society, and entertain the same sentiments with yourself: still, considering that your censorial office peculiarly subjects you to men's resentment, I cannot feel easy in leaving you exposed to it alone."

"I have clothed myself in uprightness," said his father, "and walked in the straight path of rectitude; besides, being now happily exalted by the emperor to a higher station, I may despise little slanders, and feel secure from any great evil. You need not, therefore, remain on that account; but when you go, neglect not to prosecute your studies, nor forget to make the virtuous ancients your models: and on no account let the impetuosity of your temper betray you into trouble."

The youth bowed low, and thanked his father for his advice; and in two or three days more, finding that his visitors rather increased than diminished, he made preparations for his journey, and bidding adieu to

* In the original there is an allusion to the partial and indistinct appearance of the fabled dragon—a sort of uncertainty that excites men's awe and wonder:—"Omne ignotum," &c.

to his father and mother, set off on his return to the family house, accompanied by his page.

> He came—by urgent calls of duty led,
> He went—to foil the vengeance of his foes:
> The destinies that o'er his movements hung
> Heav'n will in time reveal!

On his arrival, however, Teihchungyu found that the fame of his own exploit, and of his father's promotion, had preceded him. Not only did his relations and friends throng to wait upon him, but the whole district was thrown into a commotion. "Should it be always thus," thought he to himself, "I had better have remained at home in Peking. I must follow my father's advice and go to some distance, under plea of travelling for instruction."

After the expiration of a month he delivered the house in charge to a domestic, and proceeded, accompanied by Seaoutan, on his travels. But this expedition must be separately related:—to learn the effects of spirited resolution, and the embarrassments that resulted from services mutually rendered, it will be necessary to peruse the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

"SHUEYPINGSIN ADROITLY CHANGES THE FLOWER."

That weakness is a woman's lot, all know,
Few know a woman can sometimes be wise!
A single word the lurking mischief quell'd,
The flying fate was by a turn avoided:
No sound, no signal, did her plans require;
But all succeeded in the time of trial:
While to her foes' vile schemes full play she gave,
—Schemes fraught with late repentance!

When Teihchungyu, in compliance with his father's advice, commenced his tour, he was still undecided as to the best route to be pursued: considering, however, that Shantong was a province celebrated for the birth of extraordinary persons,* of men eminent on account of their talents and virtue, he thought he could do no better than proceed in that direction, with the chance of encountering such characters. His mind thus made up, he desired Seaoutau to hire a good mule, and proceeded without delay on his journey.

Who studies books must close his silent cell;
But Wisdom's search lies farther off from home.
Explore each untried nook beneath the sky,†
And fill the inlets of the mind with knowledge.

We will leave him for the present, and take up another

* Confucius among the rest.

‡ "Beneath the sky," in Chinese acceptation, is only 'the empire.'

another part of our narrative. In Leihching Hëen, a subordinate district dependent on the chief city of Shantong province, was the family residence of a person of rank, named Shucykeuyih, who had for many years been a member of the Military tribunal at Peking, where he acquired a great reputation by the bold independence of his character. It was his misfortune, however, towards the advanced age of sixty, to lose his lady, who left him no son, and only a single daughter, named Shueypingsin, of extraordinary beauty.* Her eyebrows were like the slender leaflet of the willow in spring, and her whole aspect that of a delicate autumnal flower. Brought up tenderly in the retirement of the female apartments, she surpassed in delicacy a silken tissue. Still, however, when the occasion called for it, she possessed talents and resolution beyond many of the other sex. Her father loved and valued her as a gem, and being obliged to reside chiefly at the capital in his official capacity,† entrusted the management of his household entirely

* Chinese ideas of beauty are peculiar; their ladies resemble those described in Terence:

" ——— quas matres student
" Demissis humeris esse: vincto pectore (pede), ut graciles sient:
" Si qua est habitior paulo, pugilem esse aiunt: deducunt cibum:
" Tametsi bona est natura, reddunt curaturâ junceas."—*Eun. II.* 3.

† It is well known to be the policy of the Chinese government, that no person shall hold a responsible office in his own province and city. The statutes farther provide, that no officer shall purchase lands or tenements within his jurisdiction.

entirely to his daughter, who supplied to him the place of a son. It was in this manner that she reached the age of seventeen without any steps being taken towards her marriage.

Her father had unfortunately a very worthless younger brother, named Shueyun, who, in spite of some pretensions that he made to letters, was withal deplorably ignorant. Satisfied with the rank and consequence derived from his family and connexions, he associated with the vilest companions, and thereby naturally became reduced both in money and credit: for though he sometimes contrived by unworthy means to collect a little together, it soon slipped away, and left him as poor as ever. It was the happy fate of this man to have three sons, who inherited all their father's ignorance and bad qualities. He had a daughter too, exceedingly plain, but young, and born in the same year with her cousin Shueypingsin, than whom she was only two months older.

Shueyun, seeing that his brother had no son, and that his estate was large, longed extremely to get the management of it into his own hands. Unfortunately for him, however, this was impossible, as long as his niece remained single: and for this reason he was constantly employing their mutual relations to urge marriage to her. One match was praised for its wealth, another for its honours, and a third for the youth, the talents, or the handsome person of the

proposed bridegroom. But the young lady had no views of that sort at present, and their speeches made not the least impression on her.

Shueyun, at a loss what step to take, discovered that the son of the minister Kwoloongtung, a neighbour of theirs, was in search of a wife, and presently despatched some one to propose his niece. This young man, Kwoketsu, was a debauched libertine, who in his choice of a spouse dreamed of nothing but her personal attractions: he accordingly inquired if she were handsome or otherwise? —to which of course a reply was made, giving a splendid account of her beauty and accomplishments. Kwoketsu did not seem to place much faith in what he heard, but rather kept aloof from assenting to the proposals; upon which Shueyun, beginning to grow anxious, agreed that he should have a sight of his niece by stealth. Now although the two brothers had long lived separate, their mansion was originally one house, divided into two equal parts; and along the line of internal separation were points whence some view could be obtained of the contiguous apartments. Kwoketsu was led thither by the uncle to steal a look, and perceiving at once the uncommon beauty of Shueypingsin, he became eager to obtain her in marriage. When his emissaries, however, went over to make proposals, the young lady rejected them altogether.

Much chagrined at this refusal, the young man determined on applying to the principal magistrate of the district,

district, and endeavouring by rich presents to obtain his assistance. That officer, on the first proposal, being aware of the high rank and character of the young lady's father at court, expressed his fears of any unadvised proceeding; but unwilling at the same time to offend Kwoketsu, he called on Shueypingsin,* and endeavoured to influence her by argument; when soon finding it was of no avail, he thought proper to give up the scheme at once.

He heard, however, some time after this, that the father of Shueypingsin had fallen into disgrace with the emperor, for recommending a military leader who was unhappily defeated in an engagement with the enemy, in consequence of which his patron had been deprived of his seat in the Military tribunal, and immediately banished to the frontier. Finding, too, that Kwoloongtong had been lately promoted to the emperor's council, and observing the eagerness with which his son continued to solicit his assistance, he thought it expedient to change his former policy, and further the young man's views.

He accordingly sent for the uncle Shueyun, and addressed him thus: "When young persons of either sex have

* This may appear a violation of the strict seclusion of females in China: but the Chehëen had a magisterial right to make such a visit which an indifferent person could not have assumed; and this visit would of course be made under the usual restrictions and formalities, a screen being interposed, and the lady being heard, but not seen. They will sometimes depart from their strict rules in favour even of strangers; and Englishmen have occasionally been allowed the honour of a visit to ladies of some consideration, when they allowed themselves not only to be heard, but seen too.

have reached the proper age, and a suitable match presents itself, it should not be neglected. That a daughter ought to await her father's commands on this point, is doubtless the general rule: but if time presses, and further delay is inexpedient, the general rule must yield to the particular case. Your niece is now of a marriageable age, she is left at home without the protection of either mother or brothers; and there are a number of youths among the household, which alone is objectionable. All this, however, would be of less consequence, were her father still in office at Peking, as it might then be argued that she was awaiting his choice: but now, unhappily, he is exiled to the frontier, and his very existence becomes extremely uncertain; why not act, then, according to the exigency of the case: and since your niece may not chuse for herself, make use of your privilege, as her nearest relation, to chuse for her? Besides, the father of Kwoketsu has been promoted to the highest dignity, and that youth himself possesses good abilities. It is altogether an excellent match, and you ought by no means to allow the transient prejudices of your niece to interfere with such important arrangements for her future life. I asked you to come hither on purpose to give you this advice; and if you do not chuse to follow it, you will not only miss a good match, but throw away an opportunity of benefiting your own private interests."*

Shueyun

* He takes care that the strongest argument shall come last.

Shueyun very readily fell in with a scheme which so exactly suited his own views. "Sir," said he to the magistrate, "I have already taken great pains to persuade my niece; but accustomed, like a spoiled child as she is, to consult nothing but her own whims, she treated every proposal of the kind with contempt. Backed however by the weight of your worship's wise and enlightened instructions, I shall now go and convey them to my niece. She cannot plead her father's wishes as an excuse for her obstinacy, and will hardly venture to oppose your authority."

He proceeded straight home, and went over to see his niece with an affectation of great alarm. "You know," said he to her, "what pains I took to persuade you to compliance when the Chefoo came here with his proposals; and with how little success. The mischief that an underling in office can do, when provoked, to those under his authority, is proverbial: what then may you not expect from a person of his power and consequence! As long as your father remained in office, he was inclined to keep some terms with us; but now that he is disgraced and banished, the case becomes quite altered. His worship begins to use very strong language; and unless you comply forthwith, the worst is to be feared. You are an unprotected orphan; I myself have no influence: what then can we do to oppose him?" He concluded by repeating his former praises of Kwoketsu, and advising his niece to consider, that

that if she refused this fair offer, she might live to repent it two or three years hence, when an equally good match should be out of the question.

Shueypingsin replied by urging the necessity of her parents' consent on a subject so important as marriage, and the impropriety of her being guided by any other authority. "But," said her uncle, "the magistrate has already settled this point: he has determined, that since your father's consent cannot be obtained, the consent of the local civil officer is the same thing; or at least that your uncle's authority may supply its place. Do not persist any longer in your obstinacy."

His niece held down her head in a thoughtful posture, and seemed to reflect within herself for a few moments. "The magistrate must, no doubt, be respected," said she; "but still he is not a member of the family. If you, my uncle, however, chuse to supply my father's place on this occasion, it certainly admits of consideration."

"And why not?" said Shueyun; "Are not a father and an uncle the nearest possible relations?"

"I have always looked on my father's consent as indispensable," replied his niece; "but if a father and an uncle are really the same thing, then do you take the whole affair upon yourself: there can be no occasion to consult *me* about it."

Shueyun was overjoyed to hear her talk in this way. "Now," exclaimed he, "you begin to think reasonably!

ably! What should have made me take such pains on this subject, had I not felt myself competent to carry it through? But hear me, child: you will experience hereafter the full advantages of this match: your future father-in-law is of the emperor's council; and should matters turn out well, he may be induced to present a petition for your father's recal from exile."

"This indeed would be fortunate!" observed his niece.

"Now," continued he, "as the magistrate is expecting your answer, suppose you make out, in your own hand-writing, a ticket of nativity,* that I may present it in token of your consent."

"It will be more proper for *you* to provide the nuptial ticket," replied his niece; "for it would seem indecorous on the part of a female."

"Well," answered he, "I represent your father, and may do so with great propriety; but pray give me a draft at least of your eight characters."

Shueypingsin immediately took up a pencil; and when she had written out eight characters by pairs, in four rows, gave the paper to her uncle. He, delighted with his acquisition, hurried home to his own house; and

* Consisting of eight characters, which express in pairs the year, month, day, and hour of a person's birth, and are the ground-work of a calculation which the professors of judicial astrology, among this superstitious people, pretend to make of one's fortune. In negociating a marriage, the *pătsze* (eight characters) of either party are sent and compared together.

and calling his three sons together, told them that the marriage was finally settled.

" But it was only yesterday," observed the eldest, " that our cousin* made every possible objection; whence comes this sudden compliance to-day?"

" The only difficulty with her," replied Shueyun, " was the want of her father's consent; but the moment I told her an uncle's would do as well, she complied at once."

" Yes," said the son; " but when she considers the matter again, I fear she may change her mind."

" There can be no changing now," cried the father; " I have made her give me her eight characters;" so taking the paper out of his sleeve, he shewed it to his three sons.

They all viewed it with delight; and agreed that changing was now quite out of the question. " Very well," said Shueyun; " but there is something to be done yet"—and being asked to explain himself, continued:— " she says, that since I act in her father's place, the nuptial

* Literally, ' our sister on the other side of the wall.' The sons and daughters of an *uncle* on the father's side, as they have the same family name, and very often live under the same roof, are styled brothers and sisters, with some such qualification as the above, and, like brothers and sisters, cannot intermarry with their cousins: not so the children of an *aunt*, since a woman, when once married, belongs altogether to her husband's family, and becomes almost alienated from her own relations by blood. This, however, must be understood with the exception of her lawful allegiance to her own father and mother, which seems to remain in full force (see Le Kee), while the additional and equally strong subjection to the parents of her husband is superadded.

nuptial ticket, and the usual presents, must be provided by myself."

"We must spend a little to obtain more," observed his eldest son; "unless we chuse to incur this small expense now, we can hardly expect to possess her father's property by and bye."

"That is all very well," replied Shueyun; "but where is the money to come from?"

After a little consultation they agreed to pledge a portion of the family wardrobe;* and being thus possessed of some ready money, they first provided a roll of scarlet silk, on which the eight characters were blazoned† in solid gold; and a handsome nuptial ticket being thus prepared, they took it in person to the Chefoo, telling that magistrate they had brought him the ratification of the match according to his desire. He was very glad to see it, and directed that it might be taken to his deputy the Cheheën, with his request to that officer

* The necessity of so low an expedient cannot be considered as very probable in a family so connected: but the design of the author perhaps was, to sacrifice even a little probability for the sake of placing this particular family in the most contemptible and ridiculous light. The wardrobe of a Chinese, however, being composed of embroidered silks and furs—of very expensive and lasting materials, forms a more serious portion of his property than in Europe. The translator remembers being at an entertainment where the party, according to the custom of the country, being seated in an open room, without fires, the European guests soon began to complain of cold; upon which the host immediately accommodated the whole number (ten or twelve) with handsome spencers, all made of the most costly furs; telling them, at the same time, that he had plenty more in reserve.

† Literally, 'nailed, or rivetted.'

officer to superintend the wedding.* When the latter heard it was his superior's desire, he felt himself obliged to undertake the office, so a fortunate day was selected; and he went in procession, attended by music, to present the nuptial ticket to the bridegroom. Kwoketsu seized upon the prize as though it had been a treasure of pearls; and having prepared a sumptuous repast, made much of the Chehëen. After the lapse of a short period, he provided costly marriage presents; and chusing a fortunate day in his turn, requested that magistrate to escort them in state to the family mansion of Shueypingsin.

On the day before their arrival, Shueyun had told his niece to prepare herself for their reception. She however replied, "This house, desolate and deserted as it is from the long absence of my father, is hardly a proper place to receive the marriage presents: and since you, my uncle, personate my father on this occasion, and issue the nuptial ticket, the presents also should be sent to your house. Besides, we are all descended from the same stock, and their being received on that side or this, amounts to just the same thing."

"Well," said her uncle, "they shall be received at my house; but I fancy that, in sending an answer, it will be correct to write your father's name."

"If you write my father's name," observed the young lady,

* The Chefoo, conscious that he had been guilty of a stretch of power, wished to appear as little as possible in the transaction.

lady, "how can you be said to act instead of my father? Besides, he is exiled, and in disgrace with the emperor, and should you write his name, it may be treated with some disrespect by the family of Kwoketsu. The usual ceremonies being conducted by yourself in person, it surely will be more proper to write your own name than my father's."

The simple Shueyun assented likewise to this, and hurrying home to procure some ornamented tickets, came back and requested his niece to write upon them.

"Very well," said she, "I will do so; but you had better tell people they were written by your sons, for fear they should laugh at you."

He readily agreed to this, and when Shueypingsin had inscribed his name on the tickets, she added below, that they were to return thanks for "his daughter's nuptial presents," and read them aloud to her uncle.

"But why write *my daughter?*" enquired he.

"You personate my father," said the young lady; "why not call me your daughter?"

He made no objections, but taking up the tickets, carried them over to his house. "These tickets," said he to his sons, "run in my name, and speak of my niece as my own daughter; not to mention the marriage presents, then, the fate of the whole property is settled at once."

They all rejoiced together, and congratulated each other

other upon their good fortune; and on the following day, before the arrival of the presents, they dressed themselves in their habits of ceremony, throwing open the central gate,* and preparing the great hall with silk hangings and carpets for their reception.

The magistrate was met with a loud concert of music, and entertained in a sumptuous manner through the day. Shueypingsin, on her part, took no notice whatever of their proceedings; but when the guests had all dispersed, her uncle opened the little door of communication, and invited her over to see the arrangements. He then asked her who was to take possession of the marriage presents. "As you, my uncle," replied the young lady, "incur so much pains and expense on account of this wedding, and as you represent my father, they must certainly pertain to yourself; it is almost needless to ask the question. Not only these, however, but the whole of my father's property, as he has no sons, must shortly belong to yourself and my cousins; though for the present, my father being exiled, and I uncertain of his life or death, it does not befit me to deliver them up entirely without authority."

Shueyun clapped his hands together, and exclaimed with delight, "Niece, you are indeed an extraordinary young woman! where did you learn to think and speak with so much understanding?" He then sent for his three sons and his daughter, and when the marriage presents

* See page 29, note.

sents had been inspected by them, the whole were put away in order.

> A speculation oft, through thirst inordinate
> Of gain, is ruin'd—avarice dulls men's wit!
> 'Twas not the quality of the tempting bait—
> —Our greedy fish was ready to gulp all!

When more than a month had elapsed, Kwoketsu got his house ready for the bride's reception, and having carefully selected the most fortunate day in the calendar, gave notice that he was coming in procession with the gilded sedan and band of music to take her away. Shueyun hurried over to inform his niece, and bid her prepare herself. She, however, with affected ignorance, and the greatest shew of unconcern, inquired what it was she was to prepare for?

"You seem disposed to joke," exclaimed her uncle, with some surprise. "Kwoketsu is coming in state this very day to wed you,—the procession will presently be at the door—you must know this—why affect ignorance of it?"

"He is coming to wed *your daughter*," replied his niece: "what concern has it with me?"

More astonished still, the other cried out, "Has this young man engaged the assistance and good offices of so many friends to wed your cousin? A pretty creature is she, truly, that he should send all those presents on *her* account!"

"In the absence of my exiled father," said Shueypingsin,

pingsin, " his whole household is under my especial charge—it cannot be *me* that Kwoketsu is coming to wed."

Annoyed as he was, Shueyun still pretended to laugh it off; " You talk very well," said he—" but your proceedings have not been quite so prudent."

" If I do not wish to marry," replied his niece, " who is there here that shall compel me? I am conscious of nothing improper in what I have done."

" Not wishing to marry," said Shueyun, " you should not have written and delivered to me your ticket of nativity: but that being once sent to the bridegroom, I suspect the two words ' not marry' are not so easily to be uttered."

" Uncle," exclaimed she, " do not persist in your dream: I never wished to wed this person—what then should have induced me to write out *my own* nuptial ticket for him?"

" My good niece," said he, laughing, " this cannot avail you any thing: do you think that when I took the eight characters, written by your own hand, to have them beaten out in gold, I could have been under any mistake about the fact? However, I am more prudent on this occasion than yourself, for the original paper is preserved in proof: therefore, say what you will, it can avail you nothing."

" If I really did write *my own* eight characters," replied Shueypingsin, " there is nothing more to be said;

said; but if I did not, you must cease to persecute me farther on this subject. Suppose you go and bring the paper, that we may all examine it together."

"That will be very fair," said he, and went straight over to his house, whence he brought the paper in question, accompanied by his three sons, to confront them with his niece.—"Now," cried Shueyun, holding up the paper to her, "was not that written by yourself—what have you to say to that?"

"Uncle," said the young lady, "let me ask you the date of my birth?"

"You were born," replied he, "on the 15th of the 8th moon, in the second watch—the same evening I was sitting drinking with your father, in celebration of the harvest moon: it would be strange if I did not know the day."

"And when was my cousin born?" inquired his niece.

"On the 6th of the 6th moon," replied he, "at mid-day: the weather was very hot, and occasioned much suffering to her mother."

"Have you examined this ticket of nativity," said Shueypingsin, "to see what date it records?"

"Those are merely eight astronomical characters," replied Shueyun, "without any mention of months or days—what should I examine them for?"

"But do you not understand what they mean?" said his niece.

"No," answered he, "I do not*—I only know that when they were beaten out in gold, the eight characters together weighed about one tael and one-third."

"The eight characters on this ticket," observed Shueypingsin, "express the date of my *cousin's* birth—they have no reference to me whatever: why do you come and torment *me*, then?"

"They are your's," exclaimed Shueyun, in a tone of rage and despair, "for you wrote them yourself!—how can you pretend they are your cousin's?"

"Do not put yourself into a passion, uncle," said the young lady, "but let us, in order to remove all doubt, send for a calculator of nativities, and ask him whether these characters mean the 15th of the 8th moon, or the 6th of the 6th."

Shueyun stood stupified for a while, and then began to rave, and stamp with his feet. "My daughter," exclaimed he, "has been sold and deceived by you, it is evident; but your falsehood must suffer, and the truth prevail. Not only do Kwoketsu and the two magistrates know it, but the whole neighbourhood can witness that the match was made for yourself; and though you may have falsified the nuptial ticket, yet if all the persons engaged in the transaction are of one voice, how are you to extricate yourself so cleanly?"

"There is nothing from which I need extricate myself,"

* This is as before, to place him in a contemptible light, for being ignorant of what he ought to know.

myself," replied his niece: "if the young man espoused *me*, why did he send the presents to *your* house instead of to mine?—why did *you* receive them, and return an acknowledgment on account of *your daughter?*—not a single word throughout the business had any reference to myself."

"But it was with your own consent," said he, "that I acted as your father, and therefore called you my daughter,—it was in consequence of our mutual engagement!"

"Had you no daughter of your own," answered she, "that indefinite term might have been allowable; but as you *have* a daughter, you should have made some distinction between us, and called me your younger, or second daughter:—even according to your own argument, then, you can make nothing of it."

The unfortunate uncle, finding the case go so much against him, lost all patience: he thumped his breast, stamped on the ground, and began to weep aloud. "Enough, enough," cried he, "I see you have undone me! This young man is notoriously violent; his father is of the emperor's council: he has spent a vast deal of money on your account; then, to-day, on the joyful occasion of his nuptials, he has invited all his noble relatives, and prepared a feast; the music and the state sedan have been ready since morning:—and when evening arrives, he will ride hither on purpose to carry you away. What think you he will do when he finds no

bride ready for him? I make you responsible for whatever happens;—nay, for my very life! You have had no scruple in injuring me; and I, for my part, shall not hesitate to set aside every feeling, and accuse you before the magistrates; when the circumstances are known, it will be plain that you have deceived me, not that I deceived Kwoketsu. The magistrates shall judge between us; and when it comes to that, I suspect you will make but a poor figure, whatever may be your eloquence or address." So saying he began to weep afresh.

"If you accuse me, uncle," said Shueypingsin, very calmly, "mine will not be a difficult task; I need only state that you would have taken advantage of my father's exile to inveigle me, a helpless orphan, into marriage, for the sake of possessing the family property. I apprehend your guilt would considerably exceed mine."

"I do not wish to accuse you," said her uncle, frightened by what she said; "but how can I otherwise escape the consequences of this affair?"

"If you only wish to escape the consequences," observed the young lady, "without involving me in the question, there is an easy way for you."

Shueyun was somewhat calmed on hearing this; but still exclaimed, "A god or a spirit* could hardly unravel the knot—why talk, then, of its being so easy?"

"If

* What the Chinese denominate Shinsëen, are a race of imaginary beings, haunting the woods and mountains, and enjoying a state of lazy beatitude,

" If you will listen to my scheme," answered she, the extreme trouble in which you are now placed, will be converted into an equal excess of joy and satisfaction."

Shueyun thought this was very strange. " With little less than death hanging over me," said he, " what hopes can I entertain of the kind? I shall be satisfied if you can only save me from the resentment of the bridegroom."

" I think my cousin, your daughter," said Shueypingsin, " is seventeen years of age, and you must wish her married. What prevents your taking this opportunity, and boldly effecting her nuptials?—Why go in search of trouble, when you may conclude this business so admirably?"

Her uncle held down his head in deep silence, and then exclaimed, with a mixture of fear and joy, " This, to be sure, is one way; but then your cousin is so inelegant, and so unlike yourself, that Kwoketsu will be discontented and find fault."

" The nuptial ticket," replied the young lady, " was evidently

beatitude, exempt from the cares and the passions of life; but still exercising some influence over human affairs. They are drawn as old men with long beards, or as young females, sauntering about in the moonshine, amidst a landscape of rocks and woods. We find something analogous in the early superstitions of every country.

" Jam tum relligio pavidos terrebat agrestes
" Dira loci: jam tum sylvam saxumque tremebant:
" Hoc nemus, hunc inquit, frondoso vertice collem
" Quis Deus incertum est, habitat Deus."

evidently my cousin's: the presents were evidently brought to your house; and the card of acknowledgment as evidently received them on account of *your daughter*. This evening he comes openly to your house to espouse her; and she ought plainly, therefore, to go and be married to him. What fault can he find? —But let him find fault; you have done nothing informal, and have nothing to fear. Besides, this match will place you at once among the first persons in the province;* and whatever may have occurred previously, may afterwards be easily got over. Was I right in promising that your sorrow should be converted into joy?"

Shueyun's countenance cleared up. "Whence is it, child," exclaimed he, "that, young and inexperienced as you are, such excellent contrivances should arise in your mind,—that you should be able to reduce your uncle to the brink of death, and then so suddenly restore him to life again?"

"You have no right to complain of my deceiving you, uncle," answered she; "you sought to do me a serious injury,† and I was obliged to protect myself to the best of my power."

"Say no more about it," said the other;—"but now for

* Literally, 'you will possess the honours of *Taeshan*.' This is a famous mountain in Shantong province (where the scene is laid), near Tsenanfoo, the chief city.

† Although in her own defence, the deception practised throughout by Shueypingsin must not be too strictly judged by European notions. In

for your cousin, plain and awkward as she is, and so totally unprepared for this emergency: you must come over and array her for the marriage!"

Shueypingsin readily assented to this, and taking over two of her own waiting-maids, superintended her cousin's toilet from noon even until dusk, seeing her hair combed, her face smoothed, her teeth scrubbed, and her eyebrows dressed.* Then the various ornaments were piled upon her head; her person was arrayed in habiliments of costly silk and embroidery, and she was duly perfumed with rare and precious unguents. Our young lady next instructed her cousin to affect an excess of modesty on being introduced to the inner apartments; to insist on all the lights being extinguished; and, in order to prevent a too early exposure of her face, to retire to rest very soon. The maids

In fact, deceit of all kinds is rather honoured than discouraged in China. The very words which express it, imply some superiority over the person deceived. Of the common expression *ke-pëen* 'to cheat,' the first syllable means also to 'insult;' and the second, in its original and derivative sense, implies 'to bestride a horse and ride him.' Gibbon, in a note to his History, observes: "There is yet room for an interesting work, which "should trace the connexion between the manners and the languages of "nations." In China, where almost every long journey is performed by water, *haou foongshuey*, 'good wind and water,' has become expressive, not only of 'good luck' on a journey, but of good luck in every circumstance and affair of life. In like manner (if we quit China), it could only be among a polished people that 'benigne!' meant the refusal of a favour; or that, among ourselves, 'pardon me,' has become equivalent to 'no.'

* By reducing them to a narrow curved line, which they compare to a willow-leaf in spring. The above is of course said satirically.

maids were likewise directed, when they came to fill the cup of alliance, to cause the bridegroom to get as tipsy as possible. If the latter, after a view of her face the next morning, began to give vent to his anger and disappointment, her cousin was instructed to throw herself into a fit of pretended desperation, and search for some means of destroying herself; which would, no doubt, alarm the bridegroom, and bring him to his senses. Though this young lady's intellect was not of the first order, she soon learnt a lesson which conduced so materially to the promotion of her own selfish interests;—she was presently arrayed, and prepared in all respects for the enterprize.

The bridegroom, mounted on a choice steed, and attended by a huge retinue, came in the evening to fetch home his bride; and the terrified Shueyun, without a choice left him how to act, dried the sweat from his forehead as he pushed his daughter into the state sedan;* when the music striking up, she was carried off in nuptial procession.

> Though cunning their vile plots, and laid with care,
> No match prov'd they for her intelligence:
> Vain was the fury of the †robber bird,
> Its destined victim had removed her nest.

The

* There was some reason for his alarm; for the law is, "If the family of the bride deceives the family of the bridegroom, so as to induce them to contract a marriage by indicating and leading them to expect a different person from the one actually named and described in the contract, the giver away of the woman shall be punished with eighty blows, and her family shall restore the marriage presents."—STAUNTON'S *Penal Code*, sect. ci. † See *Treatise on Poetry*, part ii.

The young man, delighted at the idea of having secured such a prize as Shueypingsin, escorted the bride to the gate of his own house, where a crowd of female attendants met and supported her to the principal hall. An embroidered silk veil being thrown over her head, and her whole person adorned like some goddess, the people present of course took her for Shueypingsin, and were very loud in their admiration. When the usual reverences had been performed, they proceeded to the bridal chamber, where the cup of alliance was prepared, and where she was invited to pledge the bridegroom—but the young lady had received her lesson, and ran immediately to hide herself within the curtains, shewing the most determined resolution to remain there. Kwoketsu took this for a natural bashfulness, and unwilling to use violence, went out to the principal hall, where his relations were assembled to celebrate the nuptials. The joyfulness of the occasion, and the exhortations of his friends, caused him very soon to become fuddled; but he contrived to make his way back to where his bride was, and where he found only a few of the candles lighted, and the young lady herself ensconced within the curtains. He made his way towards the bed, tipsy as he was, and asked why she was not asleep at that late hour? She, however, turned her face another way, and called to the women, in a low voice, to extinguish the lights. The maids, before they ventured to obey, waited for orders from Kwoketsu, who

who very complaisantly told them to do as their mistress bade them, and take their departure.

The next morning about daylight, when both awaked, the bridegroom turned his eyes towards his new wife, and to his utter dismay perceived, instead of the beauty whom he had before beheld by stealth, a woman with a broad forehead, square face, and the most plain and ordinary features! He jumped up, and throwing on his clothes in a great hurry, exclaimed, "You are not the bride I was contracted to!—what do you do here?"

"Who shall tell me that?" replied the lady; "look again."

Kwoketsu stared at her, and shook his head. "Alas, no!" said he, "she whom I meant was like a fair flower* after rain, or the willow seen through a mist!—nothing like what I now behold!—I have been sadly abused by that old dog Shueyun!"

His spouse now flew into a great passion. "Have you not married me?" cried she; "am I not your wife?—why do you abuse my father to my face in this unmannerly style?"

"Alas, alas! then," said the young man, "it was his niece whom he took me to see; you call him father, and must needs be his own daughter, not her whom I intended to espouse."

"How can you be so stupid," exclaimed his spouse, as

* Hibiscus mutabilis—Fooyung.

as she sat up in bed and put on her clothes; "you are talking of my *uncle's* daughter! If you wished to marry her, what prevented your asking *his* consent, instead of coming to my father? Besides, the nuptial ticket, which my father sent, was mine, and on the card of acknowledgment was written 'his daughter,'—surely you must have seen this! Your presents, moreover, were sent to our house, and you came in person to our house to receive me: how then can you pretend it was to espouse any one but myself? Allied to a family of rank, I have been brought to your house, and openly accepted as your wife, with all the customary and legal forms of marriage, and after all, you begin to insult me with such language as this! How am I to perform the duties of a wife,* or to raise up descendants for you hereafter?—nay, it is better to put an end to myself at once!" With this she jumped down from the bed in a pretended paroxysm of despair, and seized hold of a large red handkerchief, as if about to strangle herself.

The vexation of Kwoketsu was sufficiently great on the occasion, but he was in a still greater fright to see her in this desperate temper. Besotted and deceived as he had been by the violence of his passion,—would the reader learn the farther fruits of his folly, he must attend to the following chapter.

* Literally, 'draw water and pound rice,' a figurative expression for the same.

CHAPTER. IV.

"KWOKETSU STUPIDLY GRASPS AT THE MOON'S SHADOW."

Oh wondrous dulness to which some are prone,
Unapt to see what stares them full in view!
The spring dream fled, they still brood over it—
The autumn clouds dispers'd, they fancy still
They see them changing!—Unless heaven befriend,
The acutest become dull—the powerful steed
Unrein'd, ungovern'd, spends his speed in vain:—
Adventurous though their plots, and boldly plann'd,
Lo, a weak maiden's prudence foils them all!

We have already described the anger of Kwoketsu on finding that he had been deceived, and the terror he experienced when his new wife, after a volley of irresistible arguments, made him believe she was going to destroy herself. He gave the lady in strict charge to her female attendants, and then having dressed himself, proceeded forthwith in secret to the residence of the Chefoo.

He told that magistrate a piteous tale of the trick which had been played him by Shueyun; how he had first of all taken him to steal a look at his niece, and then contrived that he should marry his daughter. "The sums I have spent," exclaimed he, "are the least part of the evil, but it is a sore thing to be so befooled by that

that fellow! and I come, sir, to conjure you, by the regard you bear my father, to afford me some redress in punishing him."

The Chefoo, after a little consideration replied, "It is true enough that Shueyun has deceived you; but how remiss and unmindful you were of your own interests in this business! What made you receive the nuptial ticket without inquiring into the age of the bride? You have occasioned *my* being taken in, as well as yourself. But, allowing that such deceit could not easily be foreseen, how happened you not to send the presents to the bride's own house, instead of her uncle's; and when the uncle returned a card for his niece, and called her his daughter, you might very well have suspected some trick. You went, besides, to Shueyun's house to receive the lady; a very plain way of espousing his daughter. The thing, however, is settled, and she is fairly your wife. Should you complain of your bargain, very few people will believe the story. With regard to your stolen interview, it was an irregular transaction, and not rashly to be brought forward in court. Say nothing about this business at present; but go home, and wait quietly until I have had a private interview with Shueyun; I may, perhaps, gain some intelligence from him which shall enable me to assist you."

Kwoketsu was obliged to be content with this: he went home, and tried to pacify his wife as well as he could;—and there we will leave him for the present.

From

From the moment his daughter had quitted the house, the terror of the unhappy Shueyun threw him into a cold sweat. He endeavoured to sleep away his fears;—but there was no sleep for him, and he rose with the first dawn of light, for the purpose of sending a secret messenger to reconnoitre the premises. The messenger came back, and reported that every thing was very quiet; upon which he thought to himself, "This Kwoketsu is a decidedly violent character: he is not the man to bear an injury patiently!" Thus it was that he remained full of the most horrible apprehensions, until about mid-day, when a messenger came from the magistrate, with a request that he would walk over and see him. Though in miserable plight, Shueyun was obliged to muster sufficient resolution to carry him to the audience; where having arrived, he was desired by the Chefoo to retire to a back apartment and sit down. The attendants being dismissed, the following discourse was addressed to him by the magistrate:

"You know very well that the person whom I intended as a wife for Kwoketsu was your niece; instead of whom you have, in a very artful and criminal manner, passed off your daughter; thus imposing upon myself as well as the young man; who has this morning presented an address, begging me to subject you to the fullest penalties of the law in return for your vile deceit. In consideration of your connexions, I first of all send for you in this manner, thinking there may

may be something yet undivulged; and should such be the case, your only chance is to make a full and free confession of all."

Shueyun, in an extacy of terror, fell down on his knees. "Alas! sir," cried he, "how should I, who am under your worship's especial government, and have my life in your hands, dare to think of deceiving you! The transactions of yesterday were the result of mere necessity on my part, and involve details which I would gladly explain to your worship, and hope for pardon and indulgence."

"Well," said the magistrate, "sit down here, and let me hear them."

Shueyun rose up immediately, and taking his seat, gave a circumstantial relation of the whole affair from beginning to end, in which he shewed that the expedient of passing off his daughter had originated with his niece, and been adopted by him merely to escape a more dangerous predicament.* He concluded with urging that his daughter, with all her defects, being now the lawful wife of Kwoketsu, might be regarded in some measure as the award of heaven; and he trusted that his worship would consider her with indulgence.

The

* The Chinese author here details, with the most tedious minuteness, what the reader is already in possession of; and the latter will probably thank the translator for not following the example of those, who would insert every such useless repetition, for no better reason than because it exists in the original.—"Truly, for mine own part," says honest Dogberry, "I could find it in my heart to bestow all my tediousness on your worship."

The magistrate could not help listening with delight to the tale of Shueypingsin's prudence and address. "Whence," exclaimed he, "could your niece have acquired such wonderful discretion at her tender years! She is truly worthy of esteem and affection. But though the event has been sufficiently accounted for by your statement, it cannot be expected that the young man should readily submit to such treatment."

"His vexation," said Shueyun, "arises entirely from losing my niece; and had she been disposed of, at the same time that he espoused my daughter, to some other person, the case would be irreparable: but though she has escaped him on this occasion, she yet remains in her primitive single state; and if he is unable to dismiss her from his mind, let me try if I cannot contrive by some means to cajole her yet, in expiation of my past fault.* There is no reason why we may not succeed."

"Well," said the magistrate, who seemed pleased by the proposal, "should she revert to Kwoketsu at last, we will say no more about the matter: but how can you impose upon your niece, with all her penetration?"

"As long as my daughter remained single," replied the other, my niece stood upon her guard, and succeeded in

* It will be seen that they endeavour to set aside the former marriage by altering the nuptial ticket, which would have reduced Shueyun's daughter from a wife to a concubine. The Chinese author loses no opportunity of placing Shueyun in the most contemptible and ridiculous light, and never more so than on this occasion, where he is made to propose his own daughter's disgrace: so different from the conduct of the scholar Hanyuen, on a similar occasion (p. 32.)

in opposing us; but quite at ease on that head now, she can hardly be prepared against another stratagem. Let me beg your worship to send for the young man himself, and propose to him an excellent scheme which occurs to me."

The magistrate told him that, in consideration of the zeal he now displayed, no further notice should be taken of the past; but he had better not play false again, as he could hardly expect a repetition of such lenity. A messenger was then despatched for Kwoketsu, who being made acquainted with the drift of the late conversation, expressed great satisfaction thereat. He told Shueyun that it was not from any wish to treat his daughter lightly, but in consequence of the sense he entertained of his niece's merits, that he still desired to make the latter his wife. "May I ask by what means you propose to effect this?" added he.

"Simply in this way," replied Shueyun: "do you go back to my daughter, and by your cheerful and satisfied demeanour make her quite easy, until the celebration of the third, sixth, or ninth* day arrives, when you must make great festive preparations, and invite all your friends. Among those of the male sex assembled in the outer hall will be their worships the magistrates; and among the females, to whom the inner chamber will

* The Chinese have many superstitions relating to the number three and its multiples, particularly nine, in common with other nations.

"Necte *tribus* nodis *ternos*, Amarylli, colores."

be devoted, my niece cannot avoid coming, as a near relation. This being effected, you have only to produce the marriage ticket, with her own eight characters inscribed instead of my daughter's, and boldly claim her as your lawful wife, calling on the two magistrates present to settle the question. I myself shall be there to put in a word, and we need have no fear of her escaping us:* why should not my scheme succeed?"

The young man was delighted, and exclaimed that it was excellent. But the magistrate remarked, that though the plan was not a bad one, he feared Shueypingsin was too cunning to be prevailed on to attend.

"If she finds the third and sixth days pass without observation," said the uncle, "and my daughter seems fairly established in her new home, her suspicions will be entirely lulled; and when the ninth or twelfth day arrives, there will be stronger reasons for her feeling secure. She can hardly fail to attend."

The consultation thus ended, the two others took their leave of the magistrate, and having renewed their mutual exhortations, separated each to his own home.

> Reason's highway is straight and plain—unlike
> The crooked, devious paths of worthless men:
> Did not a faultless heroine sometimes shine,
> Virtue's great cause entirely would fail!

Kwoketsu proceeded without loss of time to make the requisite preparations at his house; where we will leave him,

* Literally, 'of her flying away up to heaven.'

him, and accompany Shueyun, who on his return went over with a semblance of joy to visit his niece. "Child," exclaimed he, "I wronged you much in what my passion urged me to say yesterday; for unless every thing had happened as you arranged it, we should have been in a terrible condition* to-day!" The young lady disclaimed all pretensions to credit on the occasion, and maintained that nothing whatever had taken place beyond the ordinary rules of propriety. "I was very apprehensive," observed Shueyun, "of evil consequences this morning; but no stir seems to be made about it, and we may hope all parties are disposed to rest satisfied."

"That does not follow," replied his niece; "they may think it useless to resort to unavailing reproaches, and yet be devising some scheme among themselves."

"What schemes should they devise?" said he as he left her—exclaiming to himself at the same time with astonishment, "How comes this young girl to have such a clear insight into character! I very much fear she may yet refuse the invitation."

Three days previous to the twelfth morning of the marriage, five invitation tickets appeared, one for the uncle, three more for his three sons, all of them in the name of Kwoketsu, and a fifth for Shueypingsin, written in the name of her cousin, as both the father and mother of that lady's husband were absent. Shueyun took all

* Literally, 'The skies would have come down upon us.'

the tickets to his niece. "This whole business," said he, laughing, "seems to turn out according to your prediction; our sorrow and perplexity have been converted into joy. There can remain no doubts after this invitation to our whole party to celebrate the marriage. Let us then accept it, and by our personal attendance confirm the union."

"Doubtless," replied his niece, "we must all of us attend."

Shueyun now observed, that instead of going empty-handed, they should send some presents on the day preceding, in order that due notice being thus given, their friends might be prepared. His niece assented to this also, and he presently brought a large red ticket, requesting she would specify such articles as she wished to be procured. Shueypingsin, without the least hesitation, took up a pencil and wrote a long list of presents, which she requested he would take the trouble to provide.

Her uncle now considered the plot as more than half successful, and joyfully conveyed a private notice to Kwoketsu; after which he got a calculator of nativities* to furnish him with the eight characters of his niece, which he likewise conveyed to the young man, with a request that he would have the nuptial ticket altered accordingly. Still he could not help feeling apprehensive lest his niece might

* That is, he gave the professor of astrology the actual date of his niece's birth, and received from him the eight characters which expressed it in the proper form.

might yet change her mind, and went about here and there, prying and eaves-dropping, for the chance of picking up what she said—while Shueypingsin, with her accustomed reserve, uttered not a word.

In the extremity of his anxiety, he sent a request to his daughter that she would, on the day previous to the festivities, despatch two of her women with a particular invitation to Shueypingsin; and accordingly they came, saying that their mistress felt herself under infinite obligations to her cousin for all she had done for her, and most earnestly entreated she would come at an early hour on the following day to receive her acknowledgments in person. "To-morrow being your mistress's marriage festival," said Shueypingsin, "I cannot fail to attend and present my congratulations;" then turning to her attendants, she ordered tea to be handed to the two women, and while they were taking it, addressed her conversation to them, inquiring if her cousin were just now engaged in any particular occupation?

"Nothing particular," replied one of the women. "Yes," said the other, "she was this morning sewing something on a piece of red silk, but I do not know what they call it."*

"I sup-

* The ignorance of this attendant, and the incuriosity of her mistress on the subject of what she was working, seem rather strange, as one might imagine that a nuptial ticket must be familiar to all classes. The only way of explaining it, is on the supposition that the use of red silk with gold letters, in lieu of the usual writing on crimson-coloured paper, is

"I suppose they might be gold letters that your mistress was sewing on?" observed Shueypingsin; and when the attendant replied that they were, she turned the conversation at once, and asked no more questions. The two women having drank their tea, she dismissed them, with a repetition of her promise to attend on the following day.

Shueyun, when he heard of this, was exceedingly happy, and by daylight next morning the two attendants again made their appearance, bringing with them a golden casket containing eight large pearls of a fine colour, which they presented to Shueypingsin, telling her these were sent by their mistress for her acceptance. "These beautiful pearls," said the young lady when she had inspected them, "are of such a size and value, that I could not afford to purchase them myself; and if your mistress wishes to bestow them on me, carry them back, and wait until I have seen and spoken to her." The women, not knowing what to do, took their leave with the pearls; and Shueyun immediately came over to ask his niece how many men she would require with the sedan and state umbrella?*

Shueypingsin replied, "that her father being in disgrace with the emperor, it did not become her to use the great sedan and yellow umbrella; and she should, therefore,

is uncommon, and exclusively confined to the very highest rank. We have seen before, that the author's drift is to expose to scorn the ignorance of Shueyun and his family with regard to *les convenances*.

* To which she was entitled from her father's rank.

therefore, proceed in a small chair: that on the preceding day, when her tenant at the southern farm brought his rent in grain,* she had engaged two of the country people to carry her; and her uncle need give himself no further trouble.

" What," exclaimed Shueyun, " when Kwoketsu has assembled all his relatives in such state to meet us, should not we too, who have just become allied to his family, observe some state and ceremony? If you go in a shabby sedan, with two bearers, and without the umbrella, will not people laugh at you?"

" Let them laugh," said his niece; " I am determined to do nothing incorrect."

Seeing he could not prevail on her, " Well then," said he, " if you have engaged your chair, we will precede you in a befitting style, and you may follow in any way you please." So saying he went out, and hurried with his three sons to the meeting.

> Like rolling grindstones their unsteady plots
> Still changing shift;—her's fix'd as rocks remain!
> Now this way tend their efforts, and now that,
> Devoid of principle.

When Kwoketsu heard that Shueypingsin was really coming, he could not dissemble his joy, but sent repeatedly to the two magistrates, reminding them of their promise to assist him. He had, at the same time, engaged three or four young men of his own violent and unprincipled

* In a country like China, with a small amount of circulating medium, the payment of rent in kind might be expected.

cipled character to be present on the occasion. The pearls, he wished to pretend, had been received as marriage presents; and the nuptial ticket, with the date of Shueypingsin's birth in gold letters, was to be produced in proof of the contract. Seven or eight stout waiting-maids were then chosen, and these were instructed, as soon as the young lady left her chair and entered the gate, to surround her, and in case she attempted to do herself any violence, to prevent it. He also prepared one of his most retired apartments in a style of sumptuous elegance, hoping this might have some effect in reconciling her to her situation. Nor did his female emissaries cease going to the house of Shueypingsin from daybreak until noon, about which time messengers came to announce that she had got into her chair; then presently it was reported that she was half-way, upon which the joy and satisfaction of Kwoketsu were at their height,* and he cried out to the musicians to arrange themselves to the right and left of the great gate, striking up in full band as soon as the chair arrived.

In his impatient anxiety, the young man ran out at the gate to look, and perceived at some distance a small sedan, preceded by four waiting-maids, and followed by a number of men-servants; the whole appearing to his eyes like the descent of some superior being among mortals. However, he was obliged by decorum to re-enter the house before they reached the gate, and when the

* Literally, 'his heart's flowers were all full blown."

the two magistrates heard him say that Shueypingsin was actually coming, they could not help exclaiming to themselves, " What intelligence and penetration did not this young woman display before !—It is a pity she has fallen into the snare at last !"* The chair had by this time reached the gate ; and when it was set down, the four waiting-maids displaced the blind in front. Shueypingsin was already half out of the sedan, when the seven or eight women within the gate ran out to assist her, the whole band striking up a loud peal at the same time. Shueypingsin on a sudden changed countenance, and exclaimed, " There is something in that music which persuades me they have laid a trap for my unwariness ; if I go in, I shall fall into the snare;" so she instantly re-seated herself, and told her people to be away back in a moment. The two countrymen who bore the sedan had received their instructions, and hardly waited for the order before they had the chair on their shoulders, and were hurrying away home, with the attendants after them.

How near the prey to the fell dragon's jaws !†
—To beard the tiger tempts no common risk !
Like gems and gold, her mind superior shines ;
Their plots in naked worthlessness appear.

Kwoketsu,

* They were acting contrary to their duty and inclination, through awe of Kwoketsu's family.

† The allusion is to a huge serpent or dragon, which the Chinese frequently carry in their processions, borne by fifty men—its body hollow, transparent, and full of lights, and having suspended to its nose a ball swinging backwards and forwards.

Kwoketsu, on hearing the band strike up, waited in eager expectation to see her enter, and stole into a corner to catch a passing glimpse; but to his surprise the music stopped at once, and the seven or eight female attendants ran in to seek him. "Why does not the lady come in?" said he, advancing to meet them. They told him how Shueypingsin had ordered the chair home upon hearing the band, with her speech on the occasion. "And you did not detain her?" cried he, stamping with rage.—They replied, that he could not have stopped her himself, she went away in such a hurry!

People were instantly sent in pursuit of the chair, but it was already far beyond their reach. Kwoketsu stood for a moment stupified with rage and vexation, and then rushing into the hall, told the magistrates what had happened. They heard it with astonishment, though not without some secret satisfaction. "This young woman, is really a wonder," said the Chefoo, "to discover your intentions at once from the sound of the music!" Then turning to Shueyun, he inquired if his niece had any skill in divination?* "She used to read learned books with her father," replied he, "and to predict good or ill-fortune; though we paid no regard to what

* The most common mode of divination among the Chinese is by means of wooden slips, inscribed with characters, and tossed on the ground at random. This custom is described almost to the letter by Tacitus in his account of the Germans;—"Sortium consuetudo simplex; virgam frugiferæ arbori decisam in surculos amputant, eosque notis quibusdam discretos super candidam vestem temere ac fortuito spargunt."—*Germ.* x.

what she said; on this occasion, however, she seems to have divined rightly to our cost."

The whole party present expressed their surprise and admiration. As for Kwoketsu, he could not give up all thoughts of her yet, but despatched two females with a message, "that they were all waiting for the young lady to assist at the celebration of the twelfth day;—that he himself had no intentions distinct from this,—why then so suddenly run away from the gate?"

Shueypingsin, however, sent them back with this answer: "I went to your lord's house without hesitation, confident of his good intentions, and little suspecting his designs against myself. I am now certain of the forgery of the nuptial ticket, and of his scheme regarding the pearls; not to mention the presence of the two magistrates on the occasion. Had the music not happily warned me, I might by this time have been caught in the snare. Go and present my most profound respects to your lord,—let him be contented with the wife that he has got, for he and I were never intended to come together, and he had better give up such foolish schemes and idle imaginations for the future."

The guests, on hearing this, renewed their expressions of admiration, and declared that the young lady was no ordinary person. When they had talked together confusedly for some time, and agreed that nothing more could be done, the entertainment

was

was served up, and the company departed to their houses.

Kwoketsu, however, in the bitterness of his disappointment, detained Shueyun. "I suspect," said he, "that your niece, talented as she is, and allowing her to be something more than human, could never have obtained this knowledge without assistance. You certainly have been leagued with her against me!"

In the utmost tribulation at such a charge, Shueyun fell down on his knees before heaven, and uttered this imprecation. "If I have been leagued with my niece to deceive you, may my whole house be involved in misery with myself!"*

"Then," said the other, hastily raising him from the ground, "if it be true that she has acted for herself on this occasion, I declare to you honestly, that her talents are an additional reason why I will never give her up!"

"My good son," exclaimed Shueyun, "if you will not give her up, at least cease to persecute me!—though I have still a desperate scheme in store, which you may try."

"What is that?" inquired his son-in-law.

"The 20th of the 9th moon," replied he, "is the anniversary of her mother's death,† when my niece never fails to proceed to the tomb near the southern farm,

* Literally, *Tsaou wun*, 'catch the pest.'

† Called *Keshin*, 'hateful, or dreadful hour.'

farm, to sacrifice, and perform the sepulchral rites. Her rents are at the same time presented to her, and she passes a portion of the day in visiting the flower gardens. This is so established a custom with her, that not a year passes without her repeating it: do you then, when the day arrives, mount a fast horse, and ordering your people to conceal themselves near the southern farm, wait until she has performed the oblations, and is returning home, when you may disperse her attendants and carry her off to your own house. I leave it to you to settle the plan with your own people; and whether it fails or succeeds, pray remember that you are not to persecute me farther on this subject."

"Good! good!" exclaimed the young man in the same breath; "the plan is straight-forward and easy, and shall be adopted:—but suppose the day proves stormy, she may perhaps not go?"

"My niece," answered Shueyun, "has such a filial regard for her mother's memory, that let the weather be what it may, she is sure to go." His son-in-law was delighted to hear this, and their plans being settled, they parted.

> Let not presumptuous mortals hope t'obtain
> A goddess—but beware the iron scourge
> Of the avenging power!—Still unreform'd,
> He madly holds his course—still dares to feed
> His liquorish hopes!

We leave Kwoketsu to prepare his enterprize, and accompany

accompany Shueyun, who on reaching home went over to see his niece. "How could you come to the door," said he, "and then hurry away again so strangely, while people were actuated by the best intentions? You not only destroyed the festivity of the meeting, but involved me in the suspicion of being a party to such rudeness."

"It is needless for me," replied Shueypingsin, "to discuss the young man's intentions, since they are best known to himself."

Here Shueyun joined his palms together, and exclaimed, "I swear by the god Fŏ himself, that you do him wrong! He had no intention to-day except to bring the family together; I can vouch for the probity of his conduct."*

"When I heard the three beats of the drum," said his niece, "I was aware some deep scheme must be in agitation; and though I have succeeded in foiling him this time, I feel certain that he will not give up the pursuit until he has made another attempt or two. You will learn hereafter that I did him no injury by my suspicion."

Shueyun had not a word to say in reply; but, confounded and abashed, slunk away home as quick as he could.

On

* By this oath he is made to appear at once in an odious and a ridiculous light, as he not only asseverates to what is false, but betrays his subservience to a superstition which is pretty generally despised among the Chinese. The sequel will shew the author's opinion of the priests of Fŏ, or Buddha.

On the morning of the 20th, Shueypingsin failed not to proceed with all the requisite preparations to perform the sepulchral rites at her mother's tomb.* On the preceding day she had invited her uncle to accompany her, with his three sons; but he, considering within himself that the seizure of his niece must necessarily be followed by some trouble, and that if he went in person, part of the responsibility might attach to himself, told her that he should be confined to the house by business of consequence.

"Well then," said she, "if you cannot go yourself, why not let my three cousins attend me?"

"The two elder," replied Shueyun, "have business at home; but the youngest may go and perform the rites with you." This being settled, he privately informed Kwoketsu of his motives for staying away—adding, that his youngest son might be found useful as a spy† on the occasion.

The southern farm being about four miles distant from the city, the young lady rose at daylight to prepare herself, having a large state chair ready, closed on the four sides with dark blinds, together with the yellow umbrella to lead the way. Four waiting maids followed in as many small sedans, and the young cousin, with some attendants, brought up the rear on horseback. In

* These are detailed in the drama called 'an heir in old age,' translated by the author of the present version.

† Literally, 'an ear and eye.'

In this order they proceeded leisurely on their way to perform the sepulchral rites.

> In the clear mirror the flow'r-spangled sprig
> Reflected blooms—the moon's pale image lurks
> In the bright wave—to mock the gazer's grasp!
> Each effort vainly spent, his prey remains
> Intangible, as shadows in the stream.

On the arrival of Shueypingsin at the farm, her tenant opened the gate, and conducted her chair straight to the principal room, upon which the door was closed, and the attendants on horseback remained without the enclosure. The farmer's wife brought in tea, and when Shueypingsin and her young cousin had partaken of it, the young lady inquired if all things were prepared at the tomb? The woman replied that all was ready; upon which she rose, and proceeded with her cousin to the sepulchre at the back of the farm, where they made the proper offerings to the departed, and burnt the gilt paper.

The rites being ended, Shueypingsin went to visit a pavilion on the west side of the farm, to view the beds of crysanthemum* in full bloom. To the east and west were two lofty summer-houses, of which the eastern was surrounded with young peach trees, for the sake of their blossoms in spring;† and the western pavilion, being

* The crysanthemum Indicum (Keŭh hwa) is esteemed by the Chinese on account of the variety of its colours, and towards winter the curious in flowers display large collections of this gaudy plant round their houses.

† There are two annual periods for visiting the tombs, corresponding nearly

being intended for autumnal visits, was provided in like manner with large collections of the crysanthemum. It was now autumn, and the young lady paid her visit to the latter, admiring the abundant richness and beauty of the flowers, which spread around the base of the building like a variegated carpet of gold.

Their slender shadows fill the enclosure, and a scattered scent pervades the flower-beds, planted in triple rows: the deeper and lighter tints reflect a yellow light, and the leaves shine varied from beneath the drops of dew. Each hungry flownet inhales the passing breeze, as it sheds around its incomparable lustre. The gazer sympathizes with the languishing blossoms, bending their heads all faint and delicate: the mournful view awakes in his mind thoughts suitable to autumn. Say not that it is a sight to satiate the eyes of the indifferent beholder—know that such flowers as these once inspired the poet Taouyuenming, as he indulged his genius amidst verses and wine.*

When she had admired the crysanthemums, Shueypingsin took a view of the country on the four sides of the pavilion, and observed the country people busily

nearly to the equinoxes, and those who cannot go in the spring (which is the principal occasion), are expected to attend in autumn.

* Taouyuenming flourished towards the conclusion of the Tsin dynasty. He was celebrated for his contempt of every thing but literature and ease, in which he indulged his whole life, amidst flowers, willows, and wine.

occupied with the autumnal harvest.* To her surprise, however, she perceived two idle-looking fellows standing by the side of a mat shed, gazing at the people carrying the grain. Struck by this circumstance, she looked round and perceived three more, seated on a heap of straw on the west side of the building, who, on finding that they were observed, immediately rose. On the other side of the wall, too, she caught a glimpse of her cousin, deeply engaged in conversation with a young man in a blue dress. She instantly suspected some mischief was in agitation—but said not a word.

In a short time the farmer's wife invited her to take some refreshment within, and the young lady, descending from the pavilion, sent a message to her cousin to come and partake of it. When the repast was over, the latter urged their departure, proposing that, as they had nothing more to do, they should return home immediately. "Do you amuse yourself a little while longer," said Shueypingsin, "I must give directions to the different tenants, and obtain from them some arrears of rent." When he was gone, she first settled with the people, whom having dismissed, she retired with her females to a small back-room, and seating herself there, made them turn all the clothes out of a leathern box, which was immdiately filled with broken stones and rubbish, collected for her by a trusty domestic who was called in to assist. The box was then quietly deposited under

* There is a summer harvest, in contradistinction.

under the seat of the state chair; a large stone was next bundled up in some clothes, and placed upon the seat itself; after which the door of the chair was locked, and the blinds carefully secured on all sides. The faithful domestics being then called in, and properly instructed, Shueypingsin dressed herself like one of her maids, and stepped into a small chair, the girl whose place she occupied being secretly left at the farm-house, with a charge to the tenant to send her home afterwards.

Every thing duly arranged, the doors were thrown open, and the chair-bearers summoned. These immediately entered from the enclosure, and each set of men going to their proper chair, and taking it up as before, carried it out; while the umbrella-bearer led the way, and the cousin followed on horseback attended by the servants.

They had not proceeded above a bow-shot from the farm, when between ten and twenty fellows started up in various directions, two from one side and three from another, some of whom laid hold on the state-chair, while others began to belabour the carriers. "This is our ground," cried they, "what right have you to interfere with our livelihood?"* The four chairmen being beaten away from their load, an equal number of the assailants took it up on their shoulders, and ran away at full speed: upon which the mounted at-

 tendants

* To every district there are porters attached, who have a sort of monopoly in their own boundary, by way of recompense for doing all government work gratis.

tendants in the rear gallopped after them, exclaiming, "Ruffian slaves, it is the daughter of the President Shueykeuyih that you are carrying off in this insolent manner!" The others, however, only ran the faster, and when the pursuers had nearly reached them, Kwoketsu, who was on horseback under some fir trees by the road side, with a party of mounted followers, threw himself in the way. "That young lady," cried he, "is my bride—what do you mean by detaining her?"

They pulled up in haste, and replied, "We did not know it was you, sir; but followed, lest our neglect should displease our lady."

"Go away home," said he, waving his hand, "I will be answerable for all consequences." With this he gave his horse the whip, and rode forwards with his attendants towards the sedan. The servants of Shueypingsin, being in her secret, were glad to borrow this pretext for joining their young mistress in the small chair, and quietly attending her in safety to her home.

As for Kwoketsu, he escorted the state sedan in joy and exultation into the city—but to see his joy converted into rage, and his exultation into shame, it will be necessary to read the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

" THE GENEROUS HERO ARRAIGNS A PUBLIC TRIBUNAL, AND TO SAVE ANOTHER, HAZARDS HIMSELF."

Like the sea-monster now would he devour
His prey; now seize her like the robber bird;
Thus fertile are the base in foul devices!
They reck not that when destiny's decree
Forbids success, their best laid schemes are vain!
They came and found her; but misfortune cross'd
Their homeward course—so enmities arise
In narrow paths—though had not tangled grass
Beset the way, perchance th' unrivall'd pair
Had ne'er been match'd!

Since the first arrangement of his scheme in concert with Shueyun, Kwoketsu, in order to secure the possession of the young lady after he had stolen her, engaged the assistance of the two magistrates, who it was settled should be present on the occasion, and place the matter beyond dispute by the inspection of the nuptial ticket. He did not neglect, at the same time, to invite a crowd of relations and friends, that they might witness his triumphant possession of the prize after such disappointments.

In all the pride of success he reached the gate of his own dwelling, and as the chair-bearers waited his directions, he waved his hand and bade them carry the sedan into the house, repeating his orders until they had

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had passed the vestibule, and got as far as the raised platform in the great hall, where it was placed down. The Chefoo and those present received him as he entered, and told him that they wished him joy in proportion to the difficulties he had experienced in the pursuit of his bride. Kwoketsu stalked up in triumph to the two magistrates, and making them a slight bow, "I am not conscious," said he, "of any thing contrary to rule on this occasion, for the person to whom I was affianced is in reality Shueypingsin—here is the nuptial ticket in evidence. The deceit which was practised on me—the substitution of a stalk for a flower—I could hardly be expected to endure contentedly, and was therefore compelled to use this violence in my own right. Let me beg your worships to decide on my claim."

They both replied together, that they had not been well acquainted with the commencement* of these espousals, and it was unnecessary to recapitulate now, —that as he had merely brought to pass what should have been effected before, there could be no violation of propriety; and they accordingly desired him to forget his former disappointments, and hasten to enjoy his present good fortune.

"No," replied the young man, "that may not be; a want of formality might give this young lady herself ground

* From its irregularity, they were desirous to be as ignorant as possible on the subject.

ground of complaint; let every form be publicly observed, to prevent disputes between ourselves hereafter."

"Very well," said the magistrates, "let the sedan be opened, and request the young lady to appear and speak for herself."

Kwoketsu called some of the women to open the sedan; but when they attempted to obey, they found the door fastened with a small padlock, and informed him.

"Oh, that is a trifle!" cried he, and walking up to the chair, twisted off the padlock. The women then proceeded to unclose the door, into which they looked, and opening it wider and wider, stared at each other in astonishment, without being able to utter a word. Kwoketsu, seeing them all gazing in motionless stupidity, began to chide. "Idiot slaves! make haste and hand the lady out;—why do you stand gaping there?"

They answered in trepidation, that there was no lady for them to hand! and the young man rushed to the front of the sedan, into which he looked, and perceived nothing on the seat but a great yellow bundle—not a shadow of any living person! In an ecstacy of rage and disappointment he stamped with his feet, and exclaimed; "Did I not see her plainly in the pavilion? and yet this young girl has again foiled me; —it is really detestable!"

The

The magistrates and all present walked up to the chair, into which they looked, and, seeing it empty, exclaimed in accents of astonishment, "This young woman must doubtless be something more than human!" They turned to Kwoketsu, and advised him to give up all farther thoughts of her, for her actions were so mysterious, and so nearly resembled those of unembodied spirits, that she could not be regarded as an ordinary mortal. Stupified with vexation and shame, Kwoketsu became unable to utter a word; he could only hang down his head and sigh, while the first magistrate directed that the yellow bundle and the trunk should be taken out of the chair and examined. On finding the contents of these to be nothing but a parcel of stones, the guests all burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, and when they had ended a confused sort of consultation, in which it was discovered that nothing could be done, the party dropped off one after the other.

A single person remained behind, a particular friend of Kwoketsu, named Chingkee, who had the freedom of his house. He sat quietly in his seat when the rest had taken their leave, and his friend, going up to him, observed despondingly, "that well as every thing had been concerted for this day's enterprize, it had ended in complete disappointment. Surely there must be something in his destiny to prevent the union!"

"It

" It will be time enough to say that," replied the other, " when you find it impossible to effect your object; though were it already effected, I would not vouch for its being a predestined union. In common cases, gentle means are used to induce compliance; but as you have power on your side, and can carry her off without fearing any body, the thing may be easily brought about—why vex yourself?"

" Alas!" said Kwoketsu, " do not regard it as so easy a matter! To run away with her requires no ordinary invention, for she is so completely immured in her house, and so rarely ventures out, that let me possess all possible ingenuity, there is no opportunity for its exertion."

" Yes," answered his friend, " the present situation of her father affords you an excellent opportunity." Being asked to explain himself, he continued —" I understand it is a great while since she heard any news of her father in exile, and being of a filial disposition, she cannot but wish earnestly for his recall. Do you then prepare on a sheet of red paper a fictitious report, declaring that he has been graciously recalled by his Majesty at the recommendation of the College of Censors, and restored to office. You may send ten or twenty persons* with this straight to her house,

* It is commonly a part of the punishment of exile to prohibit all communication between the banished person and those whom he leaves behind, though the relations are sometimes permitted to accompany the exile.

house, as if in search of a reward for the joyful intelligence. Should she scruple even then to leave her apartments, they may pretend that they bring a declation of pardon from the emperor himself, and call on her to receive it. Her joy on such an occasion might well deprive her of foresight; but when she hears of the imperial grant, she cannot venture to do otherwise than come forth to pay the customary respect. A chair being prepared, let her be shut up in it at once and carried off—her ingenuity can scarcely avail her on such an occasion."

"It is a good scheme!" exclaimed the other, interrupting him with delight.

"Yes," continued Chingkee; "but I fear it may involve us in some trouble."

"In what trouble should it involve us?" inquired Kwoketsu confidently.

"She is of a distinguished family," replied his friend; "this forcible abduction, if you take her straight home, may have such an effect on her determined temper as to drive her to some desperate remedy. You, however, and the magistrates *are one*,* begin

* The expression is a vulgarism, but inserted here as being a parallel idiom with the original. A curious collection might be made of such little analogies between the Chinese and other languages: as *Lun tso*, 'to do any thing by rotation;' *Yin taou*, 'to lead the way;' *Ta tsew foong*, 'to raise the wind'—to seek a favour or advantage; *Kan king*, 'to view lightly;' *Tsing nëen*, 'of green age'—young; *Shin moih*, 'very thick' with a person; *Ta tsing shin*, 'à grand matin; *Laou shĕ*, 'prisca fides;' *Kae kwo keang*, 'vertere modum—palinodiam canere,' &c. &c.

begin by addressing them, and carry her afterwards to their respective tribunals, procuring from the superior one a reply to your address, to declare that she was properly affianced to you, and that therefore you may carry her home. Thus you will be quite safe."

"Better and better still!" exclaimed the other, overjoyed at the fair promise of this plot; and when they had talked the matter over they separated.

> Scarce has one villany been foil'd, another
> Starts in its place—what peace is there for man!
> Such pitfalls might a woman's weakness well
> Have stumbled—trials meet for th' other sex!

Shueypingsin, ever since her happy escape from the last danger, had resolved, for the greater security, to close her doors against every one, not excepting even her own sex. As for her uncle, who so positively asserted that there was no evil intention on the part of Kwoketsu, and whom the event had proved to be an accomplice with him—even he did not pay her many visits. Nothing now disturbed the young lady's quiet except the recollection of her father,—of whom she had received no intelligence for such a length of time, and whose uncertain fate could not but fill her with anxiety.

She had one morning just finished dressing, when her ear was struck by a loud uproar at the outer gate, and she was told that a number of persons had rushed in, bringing with them a great red paper, which they

they fixed up aloft in the hall, bawling out at the same time that her father had received the imperial pardon and was restored to office, and that they came in search of a reward with the joyful intelligence. Some of them added that they had got the imperial edict, and invited her to come forth and read it. The noise and confusion were so great, that she could learn nothing clearly on the subject, and the young lady therefore proceeded to the apartment at the back of the great hall to obtain a peep at what was going on. Without exposing herself to view, she perceived from thence the red paper fixed up, and several persons proposing that she should come forth and hear the edict read.

Fearful of any disrespect towards his majesty's mandate, she walked out at once into the hall, attended by two of her females, and had scarcely arrived there, before she was surrounded by the whole party of strangers, some of them exclaiming, "The imperial edict is at the magistrate's; let the young lady go thither to hear it." Hardly was this uttered, before a chair was introduced from the outside, and she was invited to get in.

The whole truth now flashed upon Shueypingsin,—who, however, lost none of her presence of mind, but stood erect in the midst of the hall, and without changing colour in the least, addressed the people thus in her usual tone of voice: "Do not be violent,

but

but listen to what I say. You have been sent hither by your master to carry me to his house, and must be aware that, so far from being actuated by any enmity towards me, he wishes to make me his wife. The means he uses for the attainment of his end are the mere consequence of my former incompliance. If I now yield to his wishes, however, I become his wife, and at the same time your mistress; and should you offer me any indignity, I shall not fail to visit you with punishment hereafter, when you cannot plead that you received no warning."

It happened that Chingkee was among the crowd, and he immediately replied, "Lady, what you say is an admirable proof of your prudence and foresight; but it is unnecessary on this occasion, for who present would dare to subject you to any indignity?"

"Well then," said Shueypingsin, "pray let the people stand aside a little, while I prepare my dress for going out, and give the requisite orders to my servants."

They immediately obeyed, and extended the circle in which she stood; upon which the young lady desired her females to bring some addition to her dress, and whispering in the ear of one of them directed her to conceal a small dagger with its sheath in the sleeve of her gown. This done, she again addressed herself to those present. "If you wish to obtain the good-will of your master, attend to what I am going to direct;" and being assured by Chingkee that they would obey her

her commands, she proceeded: "this union has certainly been very contrary to my inclinations, but the earnestness with which Kwoketsu has thrice sought it, though in opposition to strict rules, has at least proved the sincerity of his attachment, and I cannot bring myself to give him a peremptory refusal. If, however, after surprising me in this manner, you were to carry me straight to his house, it would be so clandestine and indecent a proceeding, that I would rather die than give my consent: better, then, take me first to the two magistrates, and should they approve of the match, it will no longer bear such an irregular and disgraceful aspect; and when we reach the house of Kwoketsu, I may perhaps he induced to listen to his proposals."

This agreed very well with their instructions, and Chingkee therefore replied, that they would do exactly as she desired, requesting her at the same time to enter the sedan. Shueypingsin gave some farther directions to her servants, and took with her only a couple of female attendants, and two boys to follow the chair; though she privately directed a trusty domestic to take down the great red paper from the hall, and bring it after her to the magistrate's. That done, she cheerfully stepped into the sedan.

> The prodigies she view'd with fearless eye,
> She heard the thunders with undaunted ear:
> Say ye to men's device a victim she
> Must fall?—The demons own their cunning vain!

When

When the emissaries of Kwoketsu had fairly got possession of the young lady, they felt as glad as if they had performed some grand exploit, and the whole twenty or thirty of them hurried along with her towards the magistrates, like a flight of crows or swallows on the wing. Confident in the power and influence of the master whom they served, they were speeding along in this manner, without regarding any obstacles, when it was fated they should fall in with Teihchungyu, who had lately entered the province of Shantong* on his travels, and was riding along leisurely upon his mule, with Seaoutan following him. It was in the act of turning a corner, without being prepared for such a concussion, that he was suddenly met and nearly thrown from his mule by those who were carrying the chair. Irritated by the violence of the blow, he leaped down, and stopping the first chair-bearer by grasping hold of his body, exclaimed, "Villainous slaves, is this a case of fire or sudden death to justify your tearing along thus at mid-day, as if in chase of a thief? Know you who it is you have nearly knocked down?—what do you mean by this conduct?"

The followers all ran up to the front in a body, and being stopped by the youth, began to bawl out together at him. Some of them demanded who he was, and how

* In the original it is printed *Honan*, an evident mistake, as he is said before to have resolved on going to *Shantong*, which is the scene of the present incident. The text abounds in misprints, and the translator's copy was carefully corrected by a native.

how he dared to stop the marriage procession of the son of a minister of state; while others cried out, "Whoever you are, come along with us to the magistrate's, where you shall be properly handled."*

Still more incensed at such insolence, Teihchungyu demanded, "If this is a state marriage, where are the lanterns and the music?—No, no! it is plain you are carrying off somebody by force. Come to the Chehëen, and let us hear the truth."

Chingkee, who was concealed among the crowd, now came forward, and perceiving from the youth's striking exterior that he was a person of rank and station, went up and remonstrated with him quietly; "It was a mere accident," said he, "not worth notice. I observe from your speech, sir, that you are a stranger here, and can have no concern with this matter: pray let the people go on."

Teihchungyu now felt really disposed to loosen his hold, but was prevented by a voice from within the chair, which exclaimed in accents of distress: "I am suffering violent wrong, and rely on your bravery for succour!"

"So,"

* In the original he states his name, and the others make some contemptuous puns on it, an attempt to render which may be well dispensed with, considering the difficulty of conveying a *jeu de mots* from even an *European* language, which has generally some kind of affinity with our own. They tell him that 'if he were *gold* or *jewels*, much less *iron* (his name), let him go to the magistrates, and he should be beaten to fragments.'

" So," cried he, resuming his grasp, " it is just as I said! Do not think I am going to let you pass; but make haste and bring the chair to the magistrate's."

Seeing that he would not let them go on, the fellows thronged up in a body, and tried to force him aside: but the youth laid about him in such good earnest, that he sent them flying in every direction. Chingkee now interfered in great trepidation: " Do not use violence, sir," cried he, " this affair has already arrived at a point that will not admit of its being passed over. It matters not your going to the magistrate's now, for whether you go or not, I doubt if the family you have insulted will submit to such treatment. Release the chair quietly, and allow us to proceed."

Teihchungyu, however, paid no attention to him, and being already close to the Chehëen's office, they contrived after some trouble to reach the gate. Here for the first time the youth relaxed his grasp, and walking up to the stand on which the great drum was placed, took his whip and struck a loud and continued peal. The attendants of the office, alarmed by the sound, rushed out in a body and surrounded him. " Who are you," cried they, " that dare thus to strike the drum; make haste in before his worship."

The magistrate had been prepared to give audience to those who were carrying off Shueypingsin, and to award her by his sentence to Kwoketsu. Being ready seated in court, he was somewhat surprised when,

instead of seeing the young lady whom he expected, he heard the drum beat, and presently after observed his people bringing in a person in a scholar's dress, whom they pointed out as the appellant.* That person, however, instead of kneeling on his introduction, or offering any other token of profound respect, merely raised his joined hands, and saluted the magistrate as among equals. The latter upon this demanded who he might be, and for what reason he had struck the drum?

"Who I am, sir," replied Teihchungyu, "you need not inquire, nor is there any necessity for me to answer. But I fell in, on the road, with a case of violent oppression and wrong, at which I felt so shocked as to take the liberty of striking the drum. I have to beg your worship's interference to adjust it, and to ascertain what is the real nature of the transaction;—I shall at the same time have an opportunity of observing how your worship administers justice."

The Chehëen, perceiving something in the appearance and speech of Teihchungyu which excited his apprehensions, did not venture to be hasty with him, but asked with troubled voice and countenance what was the case of oppression he alluded to?—Before there was time for a reply the whole party of Kwoketsu's people were

* A drum is placed at the door of every magistrate's office, to secure a reception to appeals from the people in urgent cases. Such appeals, however (and they lie *gradatim* from the lowest tribunal up to the Emperor himself) are always attended with great hazard, as they subject the appellant to severe punishment should his case be deemed frivolous or inadmissible.

were thronging in; but Shueypingsin had not yet shewn herself in court, when Chingkee took occasion to pass himself off for a domestic of his friend, and going up to the magistrate, addressed him thus: "Our master Kwoketsu has long since been engaged to marry the young lady whom we have brought hither; but she changed her mind, and wished to break off the match, for which reason we have been commanded to convey the lady before your worship, and, first obtaining your sanction, carry her home for the completion of the marriage."

"Well," replied the magistrate, "that being the case, it is right that the match be solemnized forthwith; why appeal to me?—Do not bring the lady in, but carry her home at once."

Chingkee upon this turned short round, and stopped the people from entering, telling them they had his worship's sanction for the marriage. But Shueypingsin, who had reached the middle of the passage leading into court, finding she was to be prevented from entering, called out aloud that she was wronged, and ran a few paces forward; upon which the attendants placed their weapons across, saying that the order had been given to depart, and she must obey it.

Perceiving the situation she was reduced to, and that they wanted to hurry her off, Shueypingsin sat down on the floor, and exclaimed loud enough to be heard in court: "It is your duty, as the people's parent,* to

 redress

* The Chehëen is called 'the father and mother' of his district.

redress their wrongs, instead of thus turning a deaf ear to their complaints."

The Chehëen persisted in ordering her to be taken away, when Teihchungyu, losing all patience, started up fiercely with a voice of thunder, and rushing towards the table, extended his arm towards the tribunal as he exclaimed: "Most stupid and worthless magistrate that you are, thus to listen, in this hall of public justice, to only one side of the question—thus to repress the complaints of the injured! Such iniquity is quite unparalleled. You might play these tricks with impunity were there nobody greater than a Chehëen in the empire; but you shall find that there are authorities above you who will not suffer it to pass."

Finding himself rated in this humiliating style, the Chehëen became incensed in his turn, and striking the table with his hand, exclaimed, "What man are you, that dare thus to give a loose to your insolence in the emperor's public court?"

Teihchungyu replied to this with a loud laugh: "A mighty high court, truly, must it be in my estimation! who to rescue the oppressed have broken into a noble's sanctuary, conferred on him by the emperor himself, while nobody dared to charge me with insolence."

Now it so happened that this magistrate, who had not long filled his present situation, being in the neighbourhood of Peking when Teihchungyu performed his exploit, was well acquainted with the circumstances,

and

and his consternation was not small at meeting him on such an occasion as this. "Sir," exclaimed he in an altered tone, you must doubtless be the eldest son of the Censor Teihying?"

"As you seem not to be unacquainted with me," replied the young man, "this knowledge may perhaps serve to restrain you in your unjust acts."

The Chehëen hurried up from his seat. "The fame of your deeds, sir," said he with a profound obeisance, "reached me like the distant sound of the spring thunder. I regret that I never had the advantage of seeing you before, and that our first meeting should be under such circumstances; I trust, nevertheless, to clear up this unpleasant subject, if you will only have a little patience with me." He then invited the youth to take the guest's seat, while those at the door brought in tea; and when they had drank together, the magistrate continued: "You are, no doubt, aware that throughout this business I have been influenced by no personal advantage, but obliged to give way to Kwoketsu's family influence."

"It was entirely by accident," replied Teihchungyu, "that I fell in with these people. I am wholly unacquainted with every circumstance relating to them. It is to your worship, therefore, that I must look for information."

The magistrate expressed his astonishment, and said he had taken it for granted that Teihchungyu came thither

thither on purpose, with the full previous knowledge of what had happened. After paying the youth a compliment on his disinterested exertions in favour of persons in no way connected with himself, he proceeded to inform him who Shueypingsin was, and how Kwoketsu, in love with her beauty, had determined to get possession of her: in what manner her uncle had tried to force her consent, and the art with which she had substituted his daughter's nuptial ticket instead of her own; —then the stratagem of inviting her to a feast, and the way in which she escaped, even after reaching the door;—and lastly, the adventure at the southern farm, with the capture of a heap of stones instead of the young lady.

Teihchungyu was charmed with the history of such admirable address and ingenuity, and his heart was touched in favour of so much excellence in a young girl. "According to your worship's account," said he, "she must surely be allied to the extraordinary characters of whom we read in remote antiquity: take no more rash steps regarding her, for she is not so easily to be gained;" and, so saying, without regarding the magistrate, he rose up hastily and walked towards the entrance, where Shueypingsin still remained, to observe her. He then found that her beauty fully corresponded with what he had just heard of the excellent qualities of her mind.

"*With the delicacy of a flower, her complexion displayed*

played a clear brilliancy which put to shame the bright radiance of the day: with the buoyant lightness of the swallow, her movements were ordered with inimitable grace and propriety. The arches of her brows were like the outlines of the vernal hills in the distance; but in their changeful expression, they shamed the varying tints of even the vernal hills. The brightness of her eyes equalled that of the clear wave in autumn; but the living sentiment which flowed from them made you wonder how the autumnal wave had lost its deity. Her waist, like a thread in fineness, seemed ready to break—yet was it straight and erect, nor feared the fanning breeze: the shadowy graces of her person it was as difficult to delineate, as the form of the white bird rising from the ground by moonlight. The natural gloss of her hair resembled the bright polish of a mirror, without the false assistance of unguents: her face was perfectly lovely in itself, and needed not paint to adorn it. The native intelligence of her mind seemed to have gathered strength from retirement; and beholding her, you might know she was of a superior order of beings: the cold and rigid strictness of her manners, severe as she herself was soft and delicate, proved her to be no ordinary inhabitant of the female apartments. Her sweet and feminine disposition, comparable to fragrant flowers, might lead one at first to class her with other fair ones: but the perfection of this pearl, the polish of this gem, discoverable*

* Called Lŭhshin.

coverable on a longer acquaintance, proved that she possessed qualities not inferior to the most spirited of the opposite sex."

Struck by her appearance, Teihchungyu advanced a few steps forward, and with a low inclination said, "Lady, or rather goddess descended to mix with mortals, pardon my blindness and ignorance in not sooner discovering you—but I have just heard the recital of your admirable prudence and address in escaping former dangers, and am unable to comprehend how you at last fell into the power of these wretches*—may I entreat that you will inform me?"

Shueypingsin rose quickly at his approach, and returning his salutation, replied: "While my father's unhappy exile was the constant subject of my thoughts, I was suddenly informed that a copy of the emperor's gracious pardon had arrived. Unable to imagine that any person could be so rash as to counterfeit this, I came out to receive it, and fell into their snare." With this she produced her concealed dagger, and holding it up, continued, "I was aware of the desperate nature of my situation, and therefore prepared to sacrifice my life when it came to the worst; but having met with so valiant a deliverer as yourself, the day of my expected death has been converted into a renewal of existence."

"But what was this copy of the imperial pardon?" inquired

* Literally, 'rats.'

inquired the astonished youth; upon which the young lady desired one of her females to take the red paper from the domestic whom she had secretly charged with the same, and present it for Teihchungyu's inspection. The latter, when he had looked over it, walked towards the magistrate, and asked him if it were true or counterfeit; but he declared his total ignorance of the existence of such a document, and inquired from whence it came? Teihchungyu, who supposed that he was pretending ignorance, put the paper into his sleeve.* "It was sufficiently iniquitous," exclaimed he with indignation, "to practice force upon a young lady of high rank:—but to counterfeit the imperial command!—I shall proceed early on the morrow to the governor of the province—These culprits your worship must be answerable for: beware lest they escape."

He then prepared to depart, but the magistrate, in great trepidation, detained him. "I entreat, sir, that you will not be precipitate;—stop, I beg, until I have examined these people, and obtained some clue to the subject." With that he ordered Chingkee and the rest to be brought in. "Ye band of wretched slaves,"† cried he, "where does this paper come from?"

They

* Literally, "sleeved it," as we say to *pocket* any thing. It is an advantageous feature of the Chinese language thus frequently to make a verb of the substantive.

† Orig. "Ignorant if you be dead or alive," to express the danger they stood in.

They stared at each other in consternation, but said not a word: upon which the magistrate ordered the ancle-pressers* to be brought, and the prisoners, hearing this terrible sentence, exclaimed altogether, "It has nothing to do with us, sir, but was prepared by Kwoketsu, who ordered us to fix it up."

"I believe that to be true," said his worship, "and shall refrain from beating you just now, guilty slaves as you are, from respect to my honoured guest;" so saying, he ordered them away into safe custody, and at the same time directed his people to provide a commodious chair, and carry the young lady safely back to her own house.

His domestics were then commanded to prepare a repast, to which Teihchungyu was intreated to stay. He, seeing Shueypingsin was secure from her persecutors, felt a degree of joy and satisfaction which led him to assent easily to the Chehëen's request, and he took his share of the wine. His host then seized the occasion to address him as follows: "Though the counterfeit pardon is the act of Kwoketsu, it is not likely that his father has any knowledge of it; should you make a stir, however, before the provincial authorities, the consequencës will attach not only to the young man himself, but extend necessarily to his

* Three sticks joined triangularly. The leg being introduced, and the ends of two of the sticks drawn together by cords, severe pain is occasioned. Smaller sticks are used to squeeze women's fingers, in forcing evidence.

his father. For this reason, sir, I beg that you will consider the case again before you proceed to act upon it."

"My concern in this business," replied the young man, "is entirely the result of accident, and I interfered for no other purpose than to afford succour to the injured lady; but if Kwoketsu can give up his pursuit of her altogether, I do not even know him by sight, and can therefore have no object in pushing the matter farther."

The Chehëen was overjoyed at this, and exclaimed, "I admire your principles, sir, in carrying your interference no farther than is necessary."* When they had sat and drank for some time longer, Teihchungyu prepared to take leave; and the magistrate, finding that he was unprovided with a lodging, directed one of his servants to attend him to the neighbouring monastery, called Changshow Yuen.† They parted, with an engagement to meet again on the following morning.

We leave Teihchungyu for the present, and turn to Kwoketsu, who being presently informed of what had taken place, set off in great tribulation to the residence of his friend the Chefoo, and told him that Shueypingsin being carried to the Chehëen's office, some young man, a friend or relation of that magis-

* Literally, "if uneven, you plane it—if smooth, you let it alone;" a proverb. † "Hall of long life."

magistrate, had been invited into court, the young lady had been sent home again in a chair, and his own people, after being threatened with punishment, had all been lodged in prison. With the reason of this, he added, he was wholly unacquainted.

"That is strange!" replied the Chefoo; "wait a little, and I will send for him."

This had hardly been said, before the other magistrate was announced, and being immediately invited in, was asked by his superior concerning the young man whom he had treated with such distinction. "You seem unaware, sir," replied the Chehëen, "that he is the famous Teihchungyu, son of the Censor Teihying; who though only twenty years of age, has already attained such universal celebrity. While I was awaiting my present appointment at Peking, I became acquainted with the circumstances attending his rescue of a young female, who had been carried off by the nobleman Takwae, and lodged in a sanctuary bestowed by the emperor; notwithstanding which, this young man burst his way in, armed with a heavy brazen mace, and brought her out in safety. For this action he was much extolled by his imperial Majesty, who severely punished the guilty noble; and the fame of this youth spread over the whole province. This morning, by a most extraordinary chance, he fell in with Shueypingsin as they were bringing her to my office, and having there ascertained

certained every circumstance, he took possession of the red paper which was prepared by Kwoketsu, and put it up into his sleeve, declaring that he would carry that forged copy of an imperial decree before the governor of the province. Had he been allowed to do this, the consequences must have been terrible, not only to the father of Kwoketsu, but to yourself, sir, as well as to me. This was the reason of my conduct towards him, and no desire on my part to shew him any superfluous civility."

"So," exclaimed the Chefoo, "this is a very awkward business!"

Kwoketsu, however, observed,* "Let him vapour away like a hero! I do not pretend to be his match in *that*; but the rank and influence of his father at court are much inferior to those enjoyed by mine: and he has no business, besides, to meddle with my affairs. Your worship will still give me a little of your assistance, I hope."

"Alas," said his friend, "it is not that I am unwilling to assist you; but he has got possession of that paper prepared by yourself, and it is impossible to do any thing under such circumstances;—this it is that compels me to be cautious with him."

"Very well, sir," replied the young man, "be as cautious as you chuse, and let the union which I am so anxious to accomplish, vanish and end in nothing."

"To accomplish such unions," said the other, "rests

* With his usual confidence and audacity.

" rests with heaven—to scheme them only is in the power of man—why speak to me in this style, my good friend?"

" Why, what more is to be done," exclaimed Kwoketsu, " after you have allowed this opportunity to slip by?"

" You mistake," said the Chehëen;—" something may still be done. He is by himself in the monastery whither I have sent him to lodge. Return home, and consult safely with a proper counsellor—you may yet discover a way of assisting yourself."

The young man took leave of his two friends, and went home in search of Chingkee, to whom he related the parting observation of the Chehëen, and required his advice. " When he placed us in custody," replied his friend, " it was merely to save appearances, and amuse Teihchungyu. Now as he tells you that your enemy is by himself in the monastery, he evidently means that you should take the hint and contrive some scheme of revenge."

" Very true, very true!" exclaimed Kwoketsu with delight. " But what shall we do with him? Shall we hire people to beat him in broad day, or get somebody to kill him in the dark?"

" Either of these plans might be dangerous," replied the other. He then drew near, and whispered cautiously in the ear of Kwoketsu what he would advise him to do.

" Good,"

"Good," cried he, with evident satisfaction, "an excellent plan! But it must not be delayed, lest he escape us." He accordingly arranged with his friend the mode of proceeding. But to learn what followed, —to observe the noble return of gratitude for benefits received, and virtue divesting itself of ordinary forms, the reader must proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

"CALUMNY IS BRAVED, AND THE PLACE OF LODGING CHANGED, IN REQUITAL OF SERVICES RENDERED."

How long do enmities endure!—The rather
Let benefits be strictly recompensed:
The calumny that hung upon her name
Prov'd her of flowers the fairest—her vile foes
Could ne'er depreciate the gem, nor stain,
Though they might foul, its surface—native worth,
Native intelligence guarded her—she walk'd
Firm and alone, without support or aid:
Though laudable the care that shuts out danger,*
The virtue that resists temptation claims
Praise not inferior!

We leave Kwoketsu and his friend to find an agent for the execution of their plot, and turn to Teihchung-yu, who being escorted to the monastery by a servant of the Chehëen, felt grateful to that magistrate for his civility, and was far from suspecting evil intentions in any quarter. But when he thought of the uncommon beauty of Shueypingsin, and of the admirable intellectual qualities she had displayed, he could

* A reference to the stories of Loonantsze and Lewheahoey. The first, being unavoidably compelled to pass some time alone in a house with a female, is said to have spent the night with a lighted taper and a book, in order to save the lady's reputation, as well as his own. The second is celebrated by Confucius himself, on account of his passionless and imperturbable character and conduct, under circumstances where ordinary persons would have yielded.

could not help saying to himself, " I never imagined that so perfect a female character existed any where! It will be happy indeed if, whenever my family seek a match for me, they find one like this. With such charms as her's, it is not wonderful that Kwoketsu was anxious to possess her, although the means he employed were quite unjustifiable, and I am delighted at having unintentionally been the instrument of rescuing her from harm, and sending her safely home again." He slept soundly that night, but Shueyping-sin was the unceasing subject of his dreams.

As soon as it was daylight, Teihchungyu called his attendant, and desired him to prepare every thing for their departure; but the resident priest * of the monastery made his appearance, and detained him. " Sir," said he, " as the magistrate provides you with a lodging here, he no doubt intends inviting you to an entertainment, and cultivating your friendship. Why be in such haste to depart?"

" I am no friend of his," replied the youth, " and come here in search of no favour or advantage from him. We had something to say together, in

 consequence

* Named *Tuhsew*, which literally means " rectifying the heart in solitude." The priests of Buddha are generally stolen or bought from their parents in infancy, and such names as the above are conferred on them. A monastery, similar to the one in the text, exists at Canton, and served as a lodging for the embassy of 1816. It contains, among other objects of curiosity to Europeans, an enormous stye of privileged pigs, whose lives are spared as an act of merit in this sect.

' Et vetus indulget senibus clementia porcis.'

consequence of a little act of injustice which fell in my way; but, that being done, there is no occasion for farther intercourse, on the ground of either business or civility. What is there to prevent my departure?"

"Nothing," replied the priest, "except that I have reported to his worship you would not go away so early." Scarcely was this uttered before a messenger arrived from the magistrate, with a card of invitation for that evening, and the priest then added, "Was I not right in detaining you?"

When Teihchungyu found that the magistrate was so pressing, he thought himself obliged to defer his journey; and the priest soon prepared his breakfast, which he had just finished, when there arrived a person dressed like an upper servant in a family, who said that he had been sent by his lady Shueypingsin to find out the young gentleman's lodging, in order to convey to him some presents in acknowledgment of his kind succour.

Teihchungyu immediately came out to speak to the man, whom he desired to return to his lady, and tell her, with his best respects, that the occurrences of yesterday had happened entirely without premeditation, and he had merely used his endeavours to rectify an act of violence which chance threw in his way; he had accordingly given a loose to his resentment, and provoked the magistrate, "who," added he, "if he finds that your lady sends me presents, will take occasion

occasion to ascribe it to wrong motives—she must not think of it."

The servant replied that his lady, who had yesterday been thrown off her guard, and well nigh fallen into the tiger's jaws, felt so much indebted to her kind deliverer, that she would be very uneasy unless allowed to offer some small token of her gratitude.

"Your lady," replied the youth, "is one of the patterns of her sex; I myself am of a temper easily excited against what is base, and in our common regard for virtue we have a better ground of mutual esteem than the mere observance of ordinary forms. It would, therefore, be highly unbefitting in me to take a present—on no account will I receive any. To-day I dine with the magistrate, but to-morrow morning shall proceed on my journey. Let me yet warn your lady against the wily violence of the tiger: let me conjure her to be still on her guard against the dangers which menace her."

The servant on his return home gave a faithful report of this message to his lady, who was charmed by what she heard. "Is there really," thought she to herself, "so perfect a character between heaven and earth—one so truly worthy of respect! I consider it a hard fate that custom debars me, as a female, from an interchange of friendship with him! How unfortunate, too, that in my father's absence there should be nobody here to receive so worthy a guest—

that the opportunity of contracting so excellent an acquaintance should melt away like ice or snow!" She then considered whether her uncle might not be available on the occasion: but abandoned the idea, as she greatly feared his treachery. She again felt desirous of sending the youth a present, but observing his elevation of character, thought he might conceive a mean idea of her for paying such minute attention to trifles;—besides, her enemies would misconstrue her motives. Thus it was that she turned the matter repeatedly over in her mind, without being able to decide on any thing.

From time to time, however, the young lady sent a person to inquire how Teihchungyu was getting on at the monastery, thinking that it might still be in her power to serve him. A report arrived in the afternoon that he was gone to dine with the magistrate; and in the evening she was informed that he had returned to his lodging, after being induced to drink freely. A messenger was despatched on the following morning to ascertain if he had set out on his journey; but he returned, after some inquiries, and said that Teihchungyu, in consequence of the conviviality overnight, had not yet risen. The suspicions of Shueypingsin were now excited—she could not rest satisfied,—and again despatched her messenger, who brought the same report as before. She inquired the reason of his not taking his departure as intended?

To

To which the servant replied, that he had asked the question, and the priest stated as a reason the wish of the superior magistrate to detain him, as he also was aware of his father's high situation, and intended to invite him to an entertainment likewise.

Shueypingsin felt in some measure satisfied by this, as it appeared suitable enough with the rank and situation of the parties. After the lapse of two whole days, however, her spy came in a great hurry to inform her, that the preceding evening the priest had invited his guest to an entertainment of herbs and fruit;* that the latter had this morning been seized with violent pains and sickness, and remained so indisposed as to refuse every thing—even tea. The young lady's fears were excited. "How should such a simple repast make him ill?—there must be something more in this!" thought she, and immediately sent a person to ascertain secretly if a physician had been called in.

She received for answer, that the Chehëen's doctor had seen him, but reported that it was nothing more than a little internal disorder from irregular diet, which medicine would soon cure. She felt somewhat quieted, but nevertheless sent off early the next morning to ascertain farther, and then learned that he had taken the doctor's prescription overnight, and been very

* This sect being debarred, by their tenets, from destroying animal life, or partaking of flesh and wine.

been very ill ever since,—that he was reduced, in fact, to the lowest degree of weakness.*

Shueypingsin's alarm became excessive. "There is some villainy," thought she;—"he has fallen a victim to some foul plot!"—But what could *she* do to save him, young girl as she was—how was it possible for her to go thither? She ransacked her invention in vain for some feasible plan, and walked up and down her room in the greatest agitation, sighing and weeping, as she exclaimed, "Alas! it was all on my account that he incurred this fatal adventure, and if I do not contrive to save him, who will?" After a moment's embarrassment she suddenly thought to herself, "The occasion is urgent, I must brave calumny for once, and act as the extremity of the case requires." She then inquired of her servants what attendants had Teihchungyu, and being told that he had but one, a boy named Seaoutan, about fourteen or fifteen years of age, she asked if he seemed intelligent? Being told he was particularly so, "Then," said the young lady, "let him be privately informed that I desire to see him, having something of consequence to communicate. Let two of you proceed immediately, one to bring him hither, and the other to remain by his master during his absence."

Seaoutan presently obeyed this summons, and the young lady inquired of him, "What could occasion your

* The original contains a circumstantiality in the description of his disorder which our translation may dispense with.

your master to fall so suddenly ill, after appearing in such good health only a few days since?"

"My master," replied the lad, "commonly enjoys the best health; but after drinking more wine than usual at the magistrate's, he began to droop, and since the priest's entertainment he has gradually became worse; while the medicine which the doctor gave him yesterday, instead of curing him, has made him still weaker than ever."

"But though so weak in body," said Shueypingsin, "has he yet entire possession of his mind?"—Being assured that he was still quite sensible, though scarcely able to speak through debility,—"then," continued she, "it is not too late to save him. Do you go back, and inform your master privately from me that the Chehëen had no good intention in detaining him. The circumstances attending my rescue, the discomfiture of Kwo-ketsu's schemes, and the affront put upon himself, have made an implacable enemy of that magistrate. The seizure of the pretended paper from the emperor, however, obliged him to be cautious, and as he perceived that your master was without friends in this place, he has put on the semblance of great civility and attention, with the ultimate view of poisoning him in his food. Unless he observes the greatest precaution from this moment, and refuses every thing they offer him, I will not answer for his life."

The page here exclaimed, "Your ladyship must surely

surely be right! for if not for some villainous plot, how should he suffer so much from the medicine which he took last night? I suspect the priest himself is one of the wretches concerned. They would persuade my master to take more of their medicine;—but I will go back and inform him of every thing, that he may treat them as they deserve."

"Hold!" replied Shueypingsin, "that must not be! The priest is most likely concerned: but he still acts by the suggestion of the Chehëen. If your master says any thing just now, the other will hear of it; and as his situation is desperate,* he will hit upon a plan still more fatal. Your master, in his present condition, is no match for his enemies; let him, therefore, feign that his illness has made him delirious, in order to throw the priest off his guard; and if you will remain quiet until night, a sedan shall be in readiness near the monastery, to which you may convey him, and bring him straight to my house. The library shall be prepared;—there he may nurse himself in safety for some days, and re-establish his health and strength. When that is effected, it will not be too late to take vengeance on his enemies."

Seaoutan assured her that he would pay exact obedience to her directions, and was going to take his leave, when she called him back and said, "I have one word more of consequence to add, which you must attend to, and

* Literally, 'he is like a man on a tiger's back.'

and recollect. Your master I know to be a person of very rigid sentiments; I am afraid, therefore, that he may object to coming hither, and be willing to run any risk rather than expose either of us to calumnious imputations. Should such be the case, you may remind him from me, that the great and virtuous have always obeyed the dictates of their own superior minds, without affecting a rigid and pedantic exterior. When the sage Confucius himself went over in disguise to the state Soong, he adapted his conduct to the necessity of his circumstances. I shall expect your master at this house, and trust that he will take my invitation in earnest, instead of regarding it as a mere matter of form."

The page promised to attend to all she said, and hastened to return to his master's bed-side, where, finding him asleep, he waited until he awoke with a deep sigh, and then, looking round to see that nobody was within hearing, reported all that Shueypingsin had directed him to say regarding the evil intentions of the magistrate. Teihchungyu listened with astonishment. "Yes," exclaimed he to himself, "a pretty dupe I have been on this occasion!" Then, with a sudden impulse of rage and resentment, he would have gone straight to the Chehëen's;—but the page mentioned the argument of the young lady in favour of his remaining quiet, and ended by telling him of her plan for restoring him to health.

Teihchungyu

Teihchungyu was charmed by what he heard, and expressed his admiration of her kindness. "But," said he, "she is a young woman without protection, and I myself a very young man: besides which, there are the events of the other day to promote suspicion and slander; better die, then, in the hands of these villains, than do her such a disservice as go to her house." His page now thought it time to recount her parting speech, which he did with great exactness, and at once delighted and persuaded his master, who exclaimed, "To judge by her words, one might take her for some great sage or hero, instead of a tender young girl!—I can have no more scruples on the subject."

He had hardly done speaking when the priest brought in another dose of medicine, and gave it to the page. "The doctor," said he, "advises that this too be taken —it will certainly cure the disorder." The boy received it with thanks, and told him that his master should swallow it as soon as he could be lifted up in bed, upon which the priest went away, recommending some rice gruel to be taken soon after: but no sooner was his back turned than Seaoutan threw the potion into the drain behind the monastery, while Teihchungyu muttered with indignation, "Oh, that I should be reduced to this condition by the machinations of that shaven-pated slave!"

When it was evening, Seaoutan perceived a small well-appointed sedan waiting at some distance beyond the

the gate of the monastery, attended by two servants, with whom having made his arrangements, he proceeded quietly to inform his master. The latter, however, was in so weak a state that he could hardly rise from his bed, and began to fear that he should be unable to avail himself of Shueypingsin's kindness. But he made a violent effort, and by great good luck there happened to be no person in the way. His boy exerted all his strength to assist him, and when they had got out of the monastery, the two servants contributed their assistance to convey the youth into the chair, which done, he was immediately carried off by the bearers. The boy ran back to the monastery, and told the priest, who acted as porter, that his master had met with a friend who undertook to nurse his complaint, and that his travelling effects might be placed under the care of the head priest until they were called for;—after which he followed the chair.

When they had proceeded half-way they were met by two more servants of Shueypingsin, each of them carrying a painted lantern. Teihchungyu, as he sat in the sedan, observing the care that had been taken in the preparation of its blinds and cushions, and saw the lanterns in attendance, could not help feeling very grateful for the care which Shueypingsin seemed to take of him.

They presently arrived at the house, where, according to the directions that the young lady had previously given, the

the chair was carried straight into the great hall and set down. The lamps were all burning with a snowy lustre, and Shueypingsin stood in a side room on the right of the hall, whence she ordered two wives of servants in the family, and two waiting maids, to go and assist Teihchungyu out of the sedan, and lead him into the library on the east side, which was the chamber provided for him. The young man, as he got out of the chair, called his page and bade him offer his grateful acknowledgments to Shueypingsin for her goodness, which nothing but his sickness prevented him from duly acknowledging; but that with the first return of health he would bow down to the earth in token of his gratitude. Then leaning on the attendants, he was led into his chamber, and sat down on the bed, where, exhausted with the exertions he had made, he laid himself down at once with his clothes on, and being freed from all anxiety, as well as soothed by the kindness of his reception, turned round and fell sound asleep.

Shueypingsin had desired her maids to present decoctions of the fruits *heangyĕ* and *loongyen*,* as well as the root *jinseng*; but when they found that he was asleep,

* The fruit called *loongyen*, or 'dragon's eye,' and the plant *jinseng* are well known; but the *heangyĕ* has not been met with. The following is an abstract of its description in the Puntsaou, or Chinese herbal. "It is called by the Budhists the ganlo fruit, grows on a large tree, and belongs to the pear tribe; when ripe of a yellow colour,—leaves resembling the tea plant—seeds those of the pear: a wholesome fruit, and a decoction of it used to allay thirst."

asleep, they forebore from waking him. Their mistress dismissed her attendants with the exception of a few females, whom she retained in the outer hall to prepare the tea, &c., while the boy was directed to wait by his master's bed in case he should call.

It was only about the third * watch when the latter awoke, and looking round, perceived a couple of lighted candles on the table, and Seaoutan sitting at the bottom of the bed. Seeing his master was awake, the boy asked him if he felt better? "My sleep has done me good," replied Teihchungyu;—"but why are you not asleep?" Seaoutan told him that he was not the only person awake, for the young lady herself was sitting in the hall, with a number of her attendants, preparing tea and other drinks. His master was startled by this. "I must not think of letting her take so much trouble on my account!" said he,—when at the same moment several of the attendants came to the door, bringing with them the various preparations.

Teihchungyu would take no tea, and rejected the jinseng as too strong; but he tasted the decoction of loongyen, and was prevailed on to take half a bowl of it. He then addressed himself to those in waiting: "Pray present my respects to your lady, and tell her how grateful I feel for her noble exertions in rescuing me from the tiger's jaws; but if she puts herself to so much trouble for my accommodation, it will deprive me of

* From eleven until one in the morning—midnight.

of rest and sleep—let me entreat her then to consult her own ease a little."

Here one of the waiting maids, who was more particularly attached to her mistress's person, interrupted him. "My lady, sir, considers your present sickness as entirely owing to the services you performed for her, and therefore, as long as you are ill, it is impossible for her to feel at ease. While she heard you were daily growing worse, her anxiety was insupportable, but now that you are lodged in a place of safety her chief fears are allayed; and as for these little services which she is able to render, they are not worth consideration. She only begs that you will compose yourself, and thereby consult your own speedy recovery, without troubling your thoughts with any thing farther."

"But," rejoined he, "if your lady is disquieted by my sickness, I am equally disquieted by the fatigue and exertion she undergoes for my sake: let me beg her then to consult our mutual good by giving herself some rest."

"She will no doubt obey your wishes," said the other, "and retire to rest when she finds you are comfortably settled;" upon which Teihchungyu said he would retire at once, and desired his boy to assist him off with his clothes, and shut the curtains. As he turned round to sleep, he could not help remarking, with some emotion, the care that seemed to have been taken in the preparation of his bed and of its furniture.

Thus

Thus good for good, kindness for kindness done,
Prov'd gratitude unfeign'd, and from the heart:
A single thought, unworthy of th' occasion,
Had earn'd the censure of a thousand years.

When her attendants reported to Shueypingsin what the youth had said, she observed, that if he could speak thus sensibly, there was no fear of his being in any danger: but at the same time gave orders that a skilful physician should be called in the morning; and having directed two of her females to sleep in the hall, in case of any thing being required at night, she retired to her own chamber to rest.

'Tis said the thankful ghost* did knit the grass,
While deep in earth the white bones lay;—the bird
Brought in its grateful bill the healing flower:—
Fair gratitude has ever deck'd alike
Fam'd characters of old.

Unable, however, to relieve her mind from its chief anxiety, Shueypingsin rose with the dawn to renew her instructions to her domestics, charging the page at the same time to conceal from his master that she was busying herself on his account. When Teihchungyu shortly afterwards awoke, he desired to get up; but finding himself still weak, he arrayed himself in bed, and having taken some gruel, remained quiet in a reclining posture. The physician presently arrived, and when he had seen him, and examined into his case, delivered the following opinion: "Your pulse," said the doctor, "is regular, and therefore nothing serious can

* See Notes to Appendix.

can be the matter internally. Some impropriety of diet has injured the stomach: there is no need of a great deal of physic: a few days' quiet nursing will restore you. In the first place, beware of any strong emotion: secondly, beware of fatigue and anxiety: thirdly, beware of talking too much. These things are of chief consequence." Then taking out two papers of medicine, the doctor departed.

Shueypingsin heard of this favourable report with great satisfaction. But we leave her for the present, and turn to the priest at the monastery, who when he learned from the porter that Teihchungyu was gone, and had bequeathed his baggage to his care, was thrown into the utmost consternation. "I should not mind it," thought he, "had not Kwoketsu so repeatedly charged me to detain him, and make away with him quietly by poisoning his drink.* In the course of four days, I had nearly effected this, and gave him a dose at last by which I would have engaged to kill him; but in spite of all this, sick as he was, he has contrived to escape! I cannot understand it. If Kwoketsu comes here, what can I possibly say?"

He pondered anxiously for a whole night, but made nothing of the matter, and as soon as morning appeared, went over to the house of Kwoketsu to inform him. The latter flew into a violent rage. "What!" exclaimed

* Literally, 'by putting rhubarb, *patow*, and the like in his gruel.' Patow is the *croton tiglium*, a tremendously powerful drug.

claimed he, "did you not tell me, two days since, that the fellow lay half dead on his couch? How escaped he yesterday?—But, no, you have been shifting sides: you have let him off, because his father is a member of the Censorate—You have paid this slight to my family."

The priest began to rave and beat his breast in despair. "Alas! sir," cried he, "why kill me with your injurious suspicions! I belong to a class altogether dependent on those in power. How should I set aside yourself, our native patron and benefactor, to serve the other, who is a perfect stranger?"

"This is the Chehëen's affair," replied Kwoketsu, "and I shall just take you before him to explain yourself." So saying, without allowing the priest to communicate with any one, he carried him to the magistrate, and told the latter of Teihchungyu's escape.

"How is this?" said he to the priest; "how came you to let the youth go away?"

"Sir," replied the other, "if I had wished to contrive his escape, what prevented my chusing the time when he was well, and went out to dinner every day? I might then have pleaded an excuse; but after he was nine parts dead, what should induce me to send him away, merely to excite this suspicion and anger against myself? Believe me I am quite ignorant of his mode of escape."

"Well," said the magistrate, "I am inclined to believe this, and will take no farther notice; but have

you no means of tracing whither he went?" The priest replied, that he was equally ignorant on this point; and the Chehëen then inquired if any friend had visited him?—to which the other likewise answered in the negative. "But," said the magistrate, "somebody must surely have communicated with him?"

"A servant only of Shueykeuyih's household," replied the priest, "came to make inquiries, and even *he* never entered the young man's chamber."

Here the magistrate laughed, and turned to Kwoketsu. "It is just as I guessed!" exclaimed he.

"What is your worship's meaning?" inquired the young man.

"Why," said the other, "Teihchungyu's friend on this occasion is no other than Shueypingsin, whom he lately rescued. She is a wonderful young woman! Perceiving his long detention and subsequent illness, she saw at once into the whole plot, sent persons to look out, and at length carried him off. If you wish to know more about it, go to your wife's father, he will be able to inform you."

Kwoketsu paused, and presently exclaimed, "Your surmise must be true; but what a hateful creature is that Shueypingsin!—After all my solicitations she persisted in refusing me, and now she at once lodges this smooth-faced youth in her own house."

"Do not be hasty," said the magistrate, "but inquire first into the truth: we will then consult farther."

The

The priest was now dismissed, and Kwoketsu returned to his own house, whence he sent a message to Shueyun, inviting him to come over. When the latter arrived, his son-in-law told him that he understood his niece had concealed a young man named Teihchungyu in her house, and asked if he was aware of it?

"No," replied the other, "she is so vexed with me for not going to her rescue on the late occasion, that she never speaks to me; I have giving up going to see her, and therefore know nothing of this business."

"May I trouble you then, to go and make inquiries," said his son-in-law.

"I can easily do that," said Shueyun, "but pray is this youth the person who rescued her at the magistrate's?"—And being told that he was, "I heard," continued he, "that his worship sent him to lodge at the monastery—how comes my niece, then, to harbour him?" The other gave the grounds of his suspicion, upon which Shueyun exclaimed, "This business will not end here! But wait while I go and make inquiries." So saying, he walked straight home, and calling for his youngest son, told him to go over to his cousin's, under pretence of amusement, and observe narrowly what was passing there.

Shueypingsin made no secret of the business, and the boy soon found out the whole truth. He went back in a great hurry to his father, and told him that there was a young man laid up sick in the library on the east

side. This point being ascertained, Shueyun went over to his niece and addressed her thus: "Your father and I have long lived separate, and it is therefore unwillingly that I interfere in your domestic matters. But the scandalous reports I have lately heard abroad, compel me, as your nearest relation, to take some cognizance of them."

"No doubt," replied his niece, "if you have learned any thing to my disadvantage, you have a full right, as my uncle, to inquire into it; but pray what may you be alluding to?"

"I have heard," said he, "that the two sexes ought to remain properly separate—how is it, then, that you a solitary female, without either father or brothers in the house, receive into your own dwelling and there nurse a perfect stranger, one whom you scarcely know even by name? No wonder that people talk about it, for I, your near relation, cannot pretend to defend you."

To this his niece replied,* "I have always understood, uncle, that the forms and limitations prescribed by the wise and virtuous of old were for the guidance of ordinary characters, who stood in need of them, not for such as were able to act rightly by the native dictates of their own minds. When the sovereign Heuenkoong conferred with his own hands a badge on his meritorious servant, he stepped out of the

* This defence of the young lady is a curious specimen of Chinese moral sentiment.

the ordinary rules of form ;* and the philosopher Mencius, in speaking of the reserve to be maintained between the sexes, conscious that the blind observance of small forms might prejudice more important duties, states that even this reserve must be waved in matters of life and death, and that he who for a point of form allowed another to perish, would be little better than a savage beast. From such instances one may infer with certainty that all the prescriptions of the sages of antiquity had no object in view but the rectitude of men's hearts, and that where *these* are as they ought to be, a few trifling forms may be violated without harm; in confirmation of which there is this maxim, 'important duties must not be omitted; but minor points may yield to circumstances.' I remember what has been observed by a great historian, that 'particular exigencies are common to all;' moreover,† 'that benefits and wrongs should both be returned;' and accordingly, the celebrated persons of every age have undergone every extremity in order to recompense their benefactors and punish their enemies. I am a weak and secluded female, yet I respect their example. While quietly residing in the privacy of my house, without a thought contrary to the laws or to decorum, a gang of villains conspired to counterfeit the

* The custom being to transmit the same.

† There seems some waggery in overwhelming the ignorant Shueyun with such a string of authorities.

the imperial decree, and get possession of my person. *Then* where was the protection of the laws? where the restraint of public opinion?—and, I may add, where the succour of nearest relations? To whom could I talk of the reserve to be maintained between the sexes?—But in that crisis, when I was more dead than alive, and when the malice of my enemies had reached its height, could I do otherwise than feel grateful to the person who rescued me? Teihchung-yu is a young man neither known nor related to my family; yet when I consider the services his courage and generosity have rendered me, which of my neighbours or relations can I find to compare to him? Without any previous acquaintance, and meeting by mere chance with a case of oppression in his path, he defended my cause in the magistrate's public court, and saved me from perishing in the hands of my wicked ravishers. My safe return was solely owing to this youth's prowess—and now, when his services have provoked against himself the vengeance of my enemies, and fallen as he is into their snares, did I, from any fear of vulgar calumny, allow my excellent benefactor to perish unfriended in a strange place, in what respect should I differ from a savage beast? For these reasons I received him into my house, but as soon as his health permits he will leave it. I shall then have paid back some part of the debt I owe him, and I should feel no shame if it were proclaimed to the heavens and the

the earth, to the gods and demons. Who are the persons that dare comment on my behaviour? Would you undertake my defence, and act as befits my near relative, go and apprehend the villains who counterfeited the decree and seized my person; let them all be punished, both principals and accessaries.* You will then vindicate our family name from reproach; instead of keeping your hands in your sleeves, and coming over to insult me with a parcel of trite maxims, which I am surprised you should think me capable of listening to."

Shueyun was struck dumb by this lecture! He stood like a fool for some moments, but at length recovered himself sufficiently to make the following reply. "It was not that I felt unwilling to take your part, but my power and influence were unequal to the attempt. Your discourse is very ingenious and reasonable; but you must remember that the virtuous and talented bear no proportion to the mean and envious, nor the learned and enlightened to the ignorant and dull. Ordinary persons merely remark, 'Here is a young woman who entertains a young man in her house,' and their construction of your conduct is extremely unfavourable."

"The

* The Chinese law distinguishes, in most cases, between principals and *accessaries before the fact*, punishing the latter by one degree less severely than the former: while our law punishes accessaries *before* the fact as principals;—*after* the fact, as mere concealers of what they were bound to reveal.

" The world's unfavourable views of conduct and character," replied his niece, " are but the floating clouds, from which the brightest day is not free. The heart is the root of our actions; this should be continually guarded, and I am satisfied if I can keep mine pure and free from taint. With regard to other people's—if they should stand in need of watching, you have only to exercise a little private vigilance, and may perhaps make some discoveries."

After this rebuff, Shueyun was glad to slink off to his house in silence;—but to learn how our excellent pair vindicated themselves from suspicion and slander, and to see what farther schemes were agitated against them, the reader must proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

"FIVE DAYS ARE BLAMELESSLY PASSED, AND THE HERO IS DETAINED TO AN ENTERTAINMENT."

O marvel not that she, a gifted maid,
With slender waist and hands so delicate,
Could foil and vex her wond'ring enemies!
Warm was her heart, though pure—her matchless soul
Chaste as translucent ice! Th' advice she gave
Fell on her willing hearer's listening ear
In welcome words! Firm in her righteous purpose,
She needed not support—Conscious of truth
Herself, she scorn'd distrust—Alas! had each
Strict rule of form been rigidly obey'd,
Where had our hero found a safe retreat!

As Shueyun returned home in silence and disgrace, overcome by the eloquence of his niece, whom he had so confidently expected to convict of error, he could not help saying to himself, "This young girl is too ready with her reasons! I have no chance in argument with her, and had better let her alone for the future, whatever mistakes she may seem to commit."

A message just then arrived from Kwoketsu, begging to see him, so he went over directly and informed his son-in-law that it was really Teihchungyu whom she had conveyed to her house. The other was exceedingly annoyed. "What does she mean," cried he, "by entertaining

entertaining a young man there?—you are her uncle, sir, and it is your business to teach her better."

"Alas!" replied he, "have I not done my best?—but she has a mouth as keen as a sword, always at her command! I had hardly said a word before she overwhelmed me with innumerable arguments drawn from the past and the present; I could not open my mouth!" He then detailed what his niece had said; but Kwoketsu still stamped and raved, while he persisted in declaring that it was nothing but an affectation of virtue and delicacy—who was to believe her? "As to that," said Shueyun, I do not believe her myself, but unless we can catch her tripping there is nothing to be done."

"Why," said the other, "Chingkee told me yesterday, that this youth is very good-looking, and his exploit at the magistrate's evidently nothing more than a way of ensuring the admiration and good-will of such a beauty in his own favour. Far from believing that her conduct proceeds from any of the fine reasons she gives, I suspect the whole is a scheme concerted between themselves. At this time of day, if two young persons live together in the same house, with motives for feeling mutually obliged, let them be the very saints or worthies that we read of, it is impossible they should preserve their virtue."

"There is little use in our empty conjectures," said Shueyun; "you had better let me send a young servant girl to secrete herself in the house, and observe their

their words and actions: if we can only catch them tripping, there will be an end of all their fine pretexts."

His son-in-law approved of this plan; and Shueyun, on his return home, having waited till it was dusk, desired a little waiting-maid to creep over unobserved through the small door of communication, and concealing herself in a place where some billet-wood was piled up, to observe from time to time what was done within. She obeyed her instructions, and watched during the early part of the night; then waiting until Shueypingsin had retired to rest, she stole back again to her master, and reported that Teihchungyu was better, but still in bed, and that whatever he eat or drank was carried to him there. Being asked where the young lady herself remained, and if she either saw or conversed with the youth, the girl replied, that she superintended her women in the outer apartment, without ever seeing her guest, and that the chief communication between them was through the boy, who had been desired by his master to request Shueypingsin would oblige him by taking some rest, and not troubling herself so much on his account.

When the girl had answered all his other questions to the same effect, Shueyun stood lost in silent astonishment. "Can this young woman," thought he, "really be as clear and spotless as ice or crystal?—Can she persist in being so unmoved and passionless?—I cannot believe it." So he made the girl watch in the

the same manner for three or four nights successively; but without getting a word from her to criminate the parties,—and was at last reduced to his wit's end!

However, he went over to his son-in-law, and told him of his failure, adding, that Shueypingsin treated the young man with all the distant respect and reserve due from a mere host to a guest, and that there really seemed to be such perfect freedom from reproach in her conduct, that he must do her the justice to suppose she spoke truth.

The other shook his head in token of incredulity. "Ah! sir," said he, "your words might amuse some fool, and persuade him that there have been, and are still, such people as Lewheahoey* in the world! But let me go and prevail on the Chehëen to issue a warrant for the apprehension of one of the female attendants. I will answer for it that a good pinch of the fingers† will get the evidence we want from her. It may possibly turn out, that all your niece's fine talking will be put to silence; and you yourself, sir, obliged to say something in your own defence!"

"Alas!" cried Shueyun, "why murder me with such injurious suspicions? After relating all that she said to me, why involve me in the suspicion which can alone be due to my niece?"

"Well," said the other, "if you really do not wish to

* Celebrated by Confucius for his cold and immoveable temper.

† See note, p. 122.

to deceive me, suppose you go and try again to make something of this business."

Shueyun was obliged to return home, while his son-in-law went straight to the magistrate, and informed him of all that had occurred, concluding with a request that he would issue his warrant* for the seizure of one of the young lady's waiting-maids.

"As a magistrate," replied the Chehëen, "I have prescribed forms to follow; and whatever be the nature of the case, some accusation must be lodged before I can issue my warrant. Besides, this is a matter relating to the interior of a household—still less then can I interfere without previous information."

"But if your worship allows such a guilty connection to exist openly under your jurisdiction, what is it but inflicting a severe wound on the public morals."

"Were the guilt proved," said the magistrate, "it would be as you say; but if there be no guilt in the case, it only redounds the more to the credit of the public morals. This young lady has, on several occasions, conducted herself with great prudence, and the young man is already celebrated for his courage and virtue; how then are we to judge them by the usual standard?"

"You know, sir," replied the other, "what pains and anxiety the pursuit of this girl has cost me: and to see her take up a mere casual acquaintance, and treat him with

* This warrant is a slip of wood, with three or four words inscribed.

with all the honours of a distinguished guest, is enough to excite my bitterest resentment."

"Do not be precipitate," said the magistrate; "attached to my office is a lad named Tanyew, of such extraordinary cunning and activity, that he can climb over any roofs or walls, and penetrate through any obstacles whatever. I have been obliged to sentence him to punishment; but as you need his services to arrive at the truth of this mystery, I will forgive him on condition that he exerts all his skill to discover the nature of their intercourse. We shall then be able to adopt further measures."

"There can be no doubt of their detection and shame," replied the young man, "and I am much obliged by your worship's offer."

The lad in question was summoned, and being desired by the magistrate to draw near until he knelt close to his chair, was accosted thus: "Your offences deserve dismissal at least, but if you can make yourself useful in the service to which you are destined, nothing more shall be said." The fellow touched the ground with his forehead in token of gratitude, declaring that he would do his best; and the magistrate, having ascertained that he was well acquainted with the dwelling of Shueypingsin, proceeded: "There is a young gentleman at present in the house, *said* to be sick, and as I am doubtful whether this be true, or a mere pretext for something irregular, do you go and conceal

conceal yourself there, in order to ascertain it. If you behave well, I will certainly grant you a pardon; but if you either fail to discover the truth, or practise any deception which shall cause trouble, do not expect to live!"

With repeated prostrations and assurances of zeal, Tanyew was released by the magistrate's order, and proceeded to execute his new service.

> Heaven's light illumines not th' inverted bowl—
> There is no evidence like that of sight:
> Say not 'twas wrong t'engage a spy,—for else
> Virtue from vice had ne'er distinguish'd been!

We leave Kwoketsu to wait for news from the Chehëen at home, whither he returned after seeing the emissary despatched, and thanking the magistrate. Their agent obeyed his instructions with great diligence, and lost no time in reconnoitring the mansion of Shueypingsin. He waited until every thing seemed quiet, and then, gathering himself into the smallest compass possible, crept through an opening and stole towards the outside of the kitchen, where he heard them talking of an entertainment which they were preparing for Teihchungyu on his recovery. He then crept softly towards the great hall, and perceived the young lady herself giving directions within. His next exploit was to creep cautiously through the dusk to the back of the hall, where he contrived to climb, by the assistance of the great screen at the door-way, towards the interior of the

the roof,* and by dint of cunning and activity to reach the main beam of the hall, on the top of which he lay rolled up, and could observe every thing which passed beneath.

He remarked that Shueypingsin directed her attendants to place across the middle of the hall a semi-transparent screen, which divided it into two equal parts to the east and west. On the east side was placed a table, with two lofty candles lighted, for Teihchungyu: on the other, a second table for the young lady herself, but without lights. This side, being in comparative obscurity, enabled her to observe what passed on the other: while persons without the screen could discern nothing within. On both sides were laid red carpets for the observance of the customary forms at the meeting of distinguished persons. On the east, or outer side, two men servants of the family were ordered to wait upon the guest; while two females stood as channels of communication between the temporary apartments.

When the servants had laid the repast in order on either side of the screen, Seaoutan was desired to invite his master to come forth from his room. Though Teihchungyu was naturally of a robust figure, he had been exceedingly reduced by the poisonous draughts administered to him by his enemies. Five or six days, however,

* Chinese rooms have no ceilings, and therefore the beams and rafters, which are round, and very massive, become the subjects of ornamental carving, painting, and gilding.

however, of rest and remedies, with the care which the young lady herself took in preparing every thing he had drank, restored him gradually to health, and he had already regained much of his former good looks. The joy of Shueypingsin, at being instrumental to his recovery from a danger incurred in her service, had induced her to give him this entertainment: and when he issued from his chamber at her invitation, and perceived the screen and other arrangements, a feeling of respect towards his hostess was added to his previous gratitude.

He took his stand on the red carpet, and told the attendants to inform their lady that he begged to be allowed to testify his respect; but before they had time to speak, Shueypingsin replied in a clear voice from behind the screen, "Sir, your poor handmaid has to thank you for the extraordinary goodness and resolution with which you rescued her from the tiger's jaws, and imposed on her a debt of gratitude which scarcely yields to the greatest. In receiving you here, I perhaps should not have adopted these outward and empty safeguards against calumny; but considering that my father is absent in exile, that we are both single, and that under these peculiar circumstances you condescend to lodge in my house, I have paid some regard in my conduct to the opinion of the world, as the sage* did when he

* Kwonyunchang, another name for the person mentioned at page 128, *note*.

lighted his taper. "I trust that you will neither laugh at me, nor be offended with what I have done."

"Lady," replied he, "by your admirable prudence in the dangers which assailed you, and especially by your kindness towards myself, you have surpassed the most excellent of your sex in past or present times. Fallen as I was into their wicked snares, and waiting only for death to complete my misfortune, had it not been for your clear foresight, you would not have known the occasion to save me—if not for your address in changing my lodgings, you could not have found a way to save me,—and if not for your noble confidence in yourself, you would not have dared to save me; but uniting in your own person all the prudence and courage most famed in history, you rescued me from my peril without even causing an alarm—from a peril which might have made the boldest pause. Thus you saved my life from the brink of destruction, and the immense obligation I can never repay. Let me request you to take your seat, and accept my humble respects."

To this she replied: "Your misfortune, sir, was the consequence of your noble exertions in my rescue; your present happy recovery may mitigate my self-condemnation for having been the cause; but how shall I pretend to any merit on the occasion?—It is for me to betoken my respect to yourself."

Both of them now proceeded to make four profound obeisances on either side of the screen, after which Shueypingsin

Shueypingsin directed a female attendant to present a brimming cup of wine* in her name, and request Teihchungyu to take his seat. He on his side returned the compliment by filling another cup, and directing the attendant to present it to her lady. They then sat down, and before three cups had been drank, Shueypingsin addressed her guest, begging to know the occasion of his visit to that part of the country.

"No particular object drew me hither," replied he; "my resentment at the unjust imprisonment of my father in Peking led me to assail the nobleman Takwae in his retreat, and to bring out from thence the lady whom he had oppressively seized and concealed there. He was sentenced by the Emperor to three years' solitary imprisonment; and my father, apprehensive of the effects of private revenge against myself, directed me to set forth on a tour of instruction. I little expected that my first arrival here would excite the deadly enmity of this worthless magistrate, and cause him to plot against my life. To your succour, lady, I owe my escape from his machinations,—and now he shall feel what I can do in my turn! To-morrow I shall take the liberty of walking into his hall, and asking him publicly how he, who receives the imperial bounty to be the parent of those under his authority, instead of redressing their

 wrongs,

* The Chinese cups are extremely small, being inferior in capacity to our wine glasses: their wine too is very weak. These two circumstances may account for the frequent repetition of pledges in every entertainment, among a people who are habitually temperate.

wrongs, aims with the fury of a vulture or a dog at their ruin, for the sake of assisting the degenerate son of a man in power. When I have thus openly shamed, and exposed him to the contempt and ridicule of the whole district, I will wait on the governor of the province, and call on him to arrest this magistrate for his delinquency: I shall then have received some satisfaction for my resentment. The governor is an old official comrade of my father, and will no doubt listen to my complaint."

"The dismissal to which you would subject him," replied the young lady, "is certainly what his conduct strictly deserves; at the same time he could scarcely fail to feel resentment at the public manner in which you disgraced him in his own hall. The habit of turning official power to their own profit is too common among the less worthy magistrates. He knew that my father was banished, while the minister Kwoloongtung was promoted to the Emperor's council, and therefore naturally favoured the son of the latter. Consider the toil with which he fitted himself for office, and the difficulty with which he obtained his degrees; and you will no doubt feel pleased with yourself for your forbearance hereafter, when the anger of the moment has subsided. In your very first rencontre you degraded him by an act of impetuosity; and as there certainly was something suspicious in the aspect of the succour you afforded me, his vulgar mind was unable to conceive that it could proceed

proceed from high and generous motives, which lead exalted characters to act differently from the multitude. Let me persuade you to pass it over, and have nothing more to say to him. When he has considered the matter, he will be certain that our conduct has been irreproachable, and repent his behaviour to yourself."

Convinced at once by what she said, Teihchungyu replied, " Lady, I confess that I have trusted too much to the rectitude of my intentions, and behaved with too much impetuosity:—too well satisfied with myself, I have treated others with too little consideration. Awakened by your excellent advice, I begin to be sensible that my past acts were the result of passion, rather than of reason and justice. As I treated others with violence, it was natural they should seek to do me mischief; and even the Chehëen's conduct was nothing more than what my rashness drew upon itself. Charmed by your observations, I lose no time in benefiting by them:—no more will I assume that rude and boisterous demeanour. How happy is my fate, to find in yourself not only a benefactress and guardian, but likewise the best of counsellors!"

With an impulse of joy and satisfaction he filled up a cup and drank it off; while his hostess replied, " Sir, your disinterested acts of courage and self-devotion proceeded not so much from reflection, as from a natural generosity implanted in you by heaven itself. I cannot suppose it is in my power to benefit you by my poor advice:

advice: what I have said was chiefly to induce you to forgive the Chehëen."

"I shall certainly follow your instructions," said he, "and forgive the injuries he has done me. But something yet remains. I am afraid that what has passed will not allow him to forget *me;* and although our relative situations put it out of his power to injure me, my apprehension is that from revenge to myself he may seek to sully your reputation. Your conduct has been such as to defy scandal,—yet even unjust scandal is not a thing to be despised, and it will certainly be promoted by my remaining here. Having already to thank you for the complete restoration of my health, it is advisable that I take my departure early to-morrow, in order to stop the calumnious mouths of malicious people."

"I invited you," replied she, "to take up your lodging here contrary to the usages of the world, which would discountenance such a step; but there was a sufficient reason in the depth of my obligations, and in the extremity of your danger. Being now recovered, your departure or stay depends entirely upon yourself, I will not pretend to detain you. Yet to-morrow seems a little soon: let me request you to fix it for two or three days hence: it will then seem as if I had done something more in return for your valuable services."

"Lady," replied he, "my respect for your opinion is such that I cannot but accede to it." This said, the attendants presented more wine; and Teihchungyu was

so

so agreeably inspired, that he resumed: "Stranger as I am, it does not perhaps befit me to trouble you with so much of my speech, but 'when a bright mirror* is suspended before me, I cannot but avail myself of its reflection,' and therefore address you with less scruple. I am nearly twenty, and, thanks to my friends, have been provided with a great number of good instructors, but never met with one whose eloquence made much impression on my natural temper. By an unexpected happiness, I have now encountered an instructress whose words place my mind in entire subjection. I may truly say, 'to the authors of my existence I owe my life; but to my friend I owe that which makes life valuable.'† Gladly would I remain here, to be daily benefited by your advice: the laws of custom, however, forbid this:—in a day or two I must depart, and leave the high-road of instruction for the bye-paths of uncertainty and doubt. There is a question, however, I would yet ask, if I thought you would give me permission."

"You are going," replied the young lady, "to inquire the way of the blind, and my ignorance will only expose me to your scorn; yet the great and wise have not disdained to question the rude and ignorant, and the subject

* They compare a true friend to a polished mirror, by which a man obtains a correct knowledge of himself.

† A saying, in allusion to the story of two persons, one of whom being rich and powerful, furnished the other, who was his friend, with assistance and advice.

subject of your hesitation is no doubt worthy of attention. Pray then propose what you have to say, that I may benefit by it myself."

He replied: "I arrived at this place in the prosecution of a tour of instruction: but it has appeared to me, that travelling without a fixed object is to travel in vain. It is said, too, that 'what is suited to one part of the empire is not suited to another,'* In my unsettled wanderings, I have found it equally impossible to determine whither I should go, and what I should inquire after. As you have already proved yourself my best guide, let me entreat you to give me this advice also."

"The tour of the empire," replied Shueypingsin, doubtless affords the most extensive field of inquiry; but not a better place of instruction than your own home. The example of the illustrious is the most honoured mode of improvement; but it is better still to possess their virtues as a gift from nature. Changlee is recorded to have said, 'Had the world never seen a Confucius, then would not Hanyu have ranked as a disciple,' which implies a reliance on natural gifts; and in like manner would your disinterested virtues have raised you far above a subordinate rank, had Confucius never lived. I would propose, that you neglect not what is at hand in the search of that which is more remote, nor depend upon others in preference to yourself. Instead of wandering

* Literally, 'A good boat is of use in the south: a good horse in the north;'—because the south abounds in rivers, and the north in roads.

dering in search of knowledge, return home and study there. Your father enjoys a high station at the capital: he is your best example. Peking, too, is the residence of the Emperor, and the centre of learning and wisdom. You need not be ashamed of inheriting your father's profession and honours, nor of occupying a place at court. Why wander alone and independent to the limits of the earth, extorting praise from those who are not known to you? Do you wish to escape envy and strife?—this is hardly an object; for all the paths of life abound in contests and trouble—where can you escape them? Such is my opinion, if you approve it."

Teihchungyu was so charmed by her discourse, that he rose with enthusiasm from the table at which he sat, and bending in the direction of the screen: "Lady," said he, "your words have cleared up my mind, and entirely removed my doubts; accept, I pray you, my best acknowledgments for your kindness." The attendants observing him, lost no time in presenting the great cup,* which he did not refuse; but taking it in his hands, drank off the contents, and then proceeded: "Whence, is it, lady, that you, whom I should not suppose to count more than twice eight years, have acquired such wisdom and knowledge? To estimate your sentiments properly, they exceed the powers of the wisest

* *Takwong*, 'a great cup made of rhinoceros' horn.' Such cups are sometimes met with at present, carved into fantastic, and not inelegant shapes. The rhinoceros' horn is frequently used for studding waist-belts, and for other ornamental purposes.

wisest sages and brightest stars of learning;—they could proceed only from one compounded, like yourself, of the finest elements in nature. I am subdued by my admiration and respect!"

"Alas! sir," replied she, my childish talk can ill deserve the praise of wisdom. I have taken advantage of your good opinion to express my poor sentiments, and your undeserved praises cover me with confusion."*

The conversation had been carried on so long and with such spirit, and Teihchungyu had taken so much wine, that he feared he might be guilty of some indiscreet speech by staying longer: he, therefore, quitted the table, and taking leave of his hostess, thanked her for her hospitality. She did not offer to detain him, but said: "I would ask you, sir, to sit longer, were it not for the fear lest on your first recovery it might do you harm." Her attendants were then directed to take lights, and escort her guest to his own chamber.

Thus ended this entertainment, at which all the conversation that passed was overheard, and the growing friendship observed between the hostess and her guest, without a single word which could bear an ill-construction.

Th' unblemished gem reflects the purest ray,
And the blue lily, free from speck or stain,
Breathes odours exquisite—so shone the maid,
Unlike her frailer prototype, whose heart,
Touch'd by the lute,† a theme bequeath'd for song.

We

* The original conveys the same idea as—

'Salsusque per artus Sudor iit.'

Virgil applies this expression to a goddess.—*Æneid*, B. v.

† See notes to appendix.

We leave Shueypingsin, who having directed her people to wait on Teihchungyu until he was asleep, and settled the affairs of her house, retired to rest;—and proceed to Tanyew, concealed as he was on the main-beam of the hall, where he had distinctly seen and heard all that passed below. He waited only until every thing was quiet, when he crept down from his hiding-place, and stealing across the premises, got out at the wall where he had entered. The night being far advanced, he went to his own home to sleep, but with the break of day proceeded to the magistrate with his report.

That officer took him into a private apartment, and commenced a minute inquiry into the result of his mission. The emissary related in the clearest manner every thing as it happened: his concealment in the roof,—the semi-transparent screen across the hall—the table spread outside for Teihchungyu, with its two bright tapers, shedding a snowy lustre—the other table spread within for the young lady herself, without lights, and in comparative obscurity—the carpets of ceremony on each side of the screen, the mutual compliments, and the four salutations;—and lastly, the entertainment of which they each partook. "During the conversation," said he, "it was observed by Teihchungyu that his severe illness was an injury inflicted by your worship; but as you had not contrived to kill him, it was possible he might find an occasion of effecting your destruction in return."

Here the magistrate, in the utmost consternation, exclaimed,

exclaimed, " How was it he threatened to injure me ?"

" He said," replied the other, " that the governor of the province was his father's official comrade ;* that he should first of all break his way into your worship's hall ; and ask you why, instead of behaving like a parent to those under your authority, and redressing their wrongs, you treated them like a cruel vulture or dog, for the sake of favouring persons in power. When he had disgraced your worship, and made you the scorn and ridicule of the whole district, he proposed calling on the governor to degrade you from office—then arrest, and submit you to trial."

The Chehëen, on hearing this, struck his feet against the ground in the greatest trepidation. " How !"—cried he, and would have ordered his people on the instant to exhibit a notice, declaring that his worship could hear no causes to-day ; but Tanyew told him not to be alarmed, for Teihchungyu was not coming after all.

" How not coming ?" demanded the magistrate.

" Thanks to the young lady," replied the spy, " she dissuaded him from it repeatedly, by urging that your attempts to injure him arose naturally from the outrage he had committed on your worship ; she observed, too, that persons of *their* superior characters naturally behaved in a great and exalted manner, which vulgar-minded

* Tungnëen, ' same year,' means one who was preferred to literary or official rank in the same year.

minded people like yourself could not be expected to comprehend; and she said that your worship, perceiving her father was exiled, while the father of Kwoketsu had been promoted to the Emperor's privy-council, *therefore* favoured the son of the latter—which was another proof of meanness of mind, and accordingly you were beneath his notice.* She observed, besides, that the services they had rendered each other were a sufficient cause to make people suspect they were urged by private motives; but your worship must soon discover that they were as clear and unspotted as ice or crystal, and therefore repent your conduct; she added, that after the labour and application which the attainment of your degrees had cost you, it was a pity to ruin you on such an occasion as this. The young man declared that she was quite right, and felt so well pleased with her sentiments, that he entirely abandoned his intentions of revenge."

The magistrate was delighted. "This young lady," exclaimed he, "is an admirable person; I rejoice that I sent her safely home on the last occasion from my office. But what said they besides—was there any conversation of an irregular nature?"

"Their whole discourse," replied the other, "turned on letters, and on characters celebrated for virtue and wisdom.

* The Chinese author displays some art in obliging the Chehëen to listen to a string of the worst possible compliments to himself. The obvious moral conveyed, is the degrading situation to which a man is reduced, by making use of worthless agents in the prosecution of bad actions.

wisdom. They complimented each other's eloquence, and each seemed to relish the harmony of the other's sentiments. They carried on their conversation, in the intervals of the entertainment, during a whole watch.* So much was said that I cannot recollect it; but every word did I hear distinctly, all of the most respectful and decorous nature,—not a phrase nor an idea that could bear any ill construction. The worthies of old must surely be revived in their persons!"

The magistrate listened in silence, but could scarcely bring himself to believe it. "What," exclaimed he, "could a young woman, beautiful as a flower—could a young man, bright as a gem, pass the evening alone in the same house, and sit at the same entertainment, possessing as they do great intellectual accomplishments, and being mutually beholden to each other—could they pass a whole evening without being moved, and conduct themselves like the characters recorded in history or fable? You have certainly been deceiving me for their sakes!"

"Sir," replied the other, "I have no connexion with them, and never received the least gift at their hands. Why should I utter falsehoods on their account, injurious to your worship?"

Convinced at last that it must be true, the magistrate expressed his admiration. "Who shall maintain," said he with a sigh, "that the old times are not rivalled by the present! This Teihchungyu is an extraordinary hero,

* A period of two hours.

hero, highly gifted by nature; and this Shueypingsin as extraordinary a heroine, equally beholden to education! The authority of this district being in my hands, I ought to make known their merits, and obtain for them some mark of distinction* from the Emperor."

He proceeded to remit the punishment of Tanyew according to promise, and directed him to be set at large; after which he began to soliloquize thus: "Official power and influence must have their sway,† yet extraordinary and admirable persons like this youth and maiden should not be subject to their effects. Besides, the one is daughter to a member of the military tribunal, the other, son to one of the censorate; how could I be such a fool as to attempt injuring them! Let me suppose that his just resentment had led this youth to complain of me to my superiors, it would have been a little too late to seek the protection of the minister! Again, it befits me, who have attained by my exertions to the first

* The local magistrate is expected to notice (through his superiors) to the Emperor, any great examples of merit among those under his jurisdiction: and persons even of extraordinary age, or with an unusual number of descendants, are sometimes reported in this manner.

† It is the mistaken policy of the Chinese government to allow its delegates in great measure to pay themselves. The regular salary of an officer of rank is inadequate to his station; the most virtuous rob the people the least, but they nearly all avail themselves of the "devil's plea, necessity." The observations of Montesquieu regarding Turkey are, (though with very considerable reservation), applicable to China. The real taxation of this country is not to be estimated from statistical or official returns, or from what reaches the coffers of the government: a portion consists in the fruits of official malversation.

first literary rank, and who am not uncelebrated, to deserve men's approbation by deeds of worth, instead of merely following the stream of example—a manifest injustice to myself. It seems, too, that this young lady respected my literary rank, and predicted my reformation: how then can I neglect to respect myself, or allow this reformation to be delayed! Where can such a reformation more properly commence, than in the instance of these two persons? Considering the disinterested courage and other splendid qualities of this Teihchungyu, if he be not united to Shueypingsin, there is none else fit for him:—and to estimate properly the almost fabulous mental endowments of this Shueypingsin, if it be not Teihchungyu, there is none to match her. How can I do better than change my course entirely, and devote myself to the completion of their mutual happiness? Thus I may at once throw my past errors into shade, and behave in a manner befitting my respectable station."

Scarcely had he made this resolution, when Kwoketsu came in to hear the news. The magistrate told him all that he had learned from the spy, and concluded with this advice: "My good friend, you must not attempt to treat her as an ordinary female of the same age. I have no difficulty in perceiving from her behaviour that she is a very uncommon and admirable person—she will never be compelled to throw herself away. Take my advice, and give up all thoughts of her: you may easily find some other object of pursuit."

Satisfied

Satisfied now that the intercourse between Teih-chungyu and Shueypingsin afforded not the slightest ground for scandal, and perceiving that the Chehëen very bluntly took leave of his cause, Kwoketsu became convinced of the hopelessness of his schemes:—he stood stupified for some moments, and then walked off.

The magistrate sent messengers to inquire if Teihchungyu had left his temporary lodging, and desired them to ascertain when our hero really intended to return home, as he had some particular plans in relation to him. But to learn the result—to see the hardness of the gem resist friction, and its purity triumph over defilement, the reader must peruse the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

"AN AFFRONTING PROPOSAL OCCASIONS THE SUDDEN DEPARTURE OF TEIHCHUNGYU."

Nor branch nor root connected them, nor aught
But their fair virtues were their bond of union:
The vulgar form a judgment from th' outside—
These by the emulous course of noble deeds
Each other knew—Lo, as when rain and winds
Are rife, fair summer flowers their petals close;
Or, as when misty clouds approach her orb,
The delicate moon seems to contract her brows:
—So did our hero meet the paltry knave,
Whose notions with his own accorded well
As round with square!

THE magistrate, convinced as he was by his emissary of the rare virtues of Teihchungyu and Shueypingsin, became inspired with the utmost respect and regard for both, and lost no time in celebrating them to every one. Indifferent persons uttered some expressions of surprise, and then thought no more about it; but the uncle Shueyun was led to soliloquize thus: "My late endeavours to bring about the marriage of my niece with Kwoketsu did not arise from any wish that she should espouse *him* in particular; for were she but married at all, I should possess the management of my brother's property. That young man's chance is now quite gone; but she has luckily formed a great friendship for this other youth, and in spite of what

what I hear concerning their mutual reserve, I am pretty sure it is all assumed, in order to screen themselves from scandal—in their hearts they must secretly wish for marriage; and if I only go and propose the agreeable subject, it cannot but delight them. Should my endeavours succeed, the family property will come under my management of course."

No sooner was his resolution formed than he unlocked the private door, and went over in search of his niece, whom he thus addressed: "The proverb* says 'the drum that is not beat will not sound; the bell that is not struck will not ring;' and moreover, 'The eyes that are ailing for ten days will in nine more cure themselves.' Your behaviour to Teihchungyu excited other people's doubts, as well as my own, and we little expected that you would both turn out to be 'the pure metal which dreads no fire.' The perfect propriety with which you evinced your mutual gratitude, and the total absence of clandestine motives, have converted suspicion into admiration and respect."

"My conduct," replied his niece, "was different from the reserve usually maintained between the sexes; but the misfortune of Teihchungyu being in-

 curred

* These proverbs are trite and stupid enough, and seem put into the speaker's mouth to make him appear ridiculous. The first probably refers to the proof that had been made of his niece's virtue—the second, to the re-establishment of her reputation.

curred in my defence, I could not endure to act otherwise: I overstepped empty forms for the sake of rescuing him from real danger. Neither is what I have done without a sanction in the example of the wise and virtuous; and as he is now happily recovered, I have no more anxieties on the subject. With respect to what you say concerning my behaviour, it was merely what decency required of me, and therefore quite unentitled to the compliments you pay it."

"Do yourself justice," replied he—"Such people as Loonantsze and Lewheahoey* are of rare occurrence;—but let that rest. I have not forgotten that I am your uncle, and come here with a proposition of some consequence. Believe me that it is for your own good, and do not suspect my intentions."

"Every proposal," said his niece, "must be measured by the rules of conscience and propriety: if allowable, let it be adopted; if not, it must be rejected. You say your intention is good, and therefore I will not entertain any suspicion to the contrary; but let me ask what it is you mean?"

"The old maxim," he began, "well observes, 'When a youth is grown up, let him marry; when a maiden is grown up, let her become the mistress of a family.' You are still very young, but not too young for the nuptial union. If my brother were here, he would

* See note, p. 128.

would be your proper adviser; but as he is unhappily exiled to the frontier, and his return wholly uncertain, the farther postponement of your marriage does not seem expedient. I urged you before to espouse the minister's son, because he was constantly pressing me, and I could not get rid of him: but your late admirable conduct has shewn you to be far removed above ordinary females: and this Kwoketsu, though he belongs to a rich and powerful family, is a contemptible fellow, and no match whatever for you. Plenty of young men might be found in the empire with advantages equal to his; but to discover one who joins the qualities of a hero to youth and great accomplishments—one who could be considered as a proper counterpart to yourself, is not so easy. Heaven, however, when it produced the prodigy Meng-kwong, did not fail at the same time to create a Leanghoey; and when it gave birth to yourself, who have displayed such rare excellencies, it provided for you a Teihchungyu. He possesses not only youth, and talents, and personal attractions, but in addition to all these, every quality of a hero or worthy of old times. Constrained by the peculiar circumstances in which you found yourselves, good feeling urged you to recompense each other's services; and now, therefore, you are unwilling to originate the subject of marriage; but I, your uncle, can view the subject dispassionately, and consider that the mutual requital

of

of benefits is not likely to happen more than once, while wedlock would secure your common welfare for life; it should not, therefore, be neglected."

"The intentions of heaven," replied the young lady, "are beyond our reach, and we must be governed by the course of human events. Heaven produced Confucius to be a sage, and not a prince; and gave birth to the beautiful Mingfei to espouse the Tartar Chenyu* instead of the Emperor. These were the destinies of their lives, and beyond the control of either. There is nothing personal about Teihchungyu which could create an objection to what you propose; but the circumstances in which we have chanced to be placed in relation to each other put marriage out of the question."

"Your mutual good offices and friendship," said her uncle, "are quite consistent with marriage; why should they put it out of the question?"

"The rites of wedlock," Shucypingsin replied, "demand that it be first proposed to the parents by authorized persons; when their consent is obtained, the parties may contract the union: but, unhappily, *our* first meeting occurred in an irregular and unexpected rencontre at the magistrate's; and when Teihchungyu subsequently fell sick, I was compelled to receive him at my own house. Our mutual gratitude and

* Otherwise called Chaoukeun and Hanchenyu. Their history forms the subject of the Chinese tragedy appended to this romance.

and friendship were thereby complete; but this is not the mode of contracting marriage among scrupulous and exalted characters."

"Remember," said her uncle, "what you observed the other day, about the license afforded by particular exigencies."

"Such exigencies," answered she, "are of rare occurrence, and when they are past, we must not invent fictitious ones. Besides, a certain freedom of action may be allowed in all things except so important a concern as marriage, which, being the chief of human relations, should be scrupulously regulated from first to last—it does not allow of any such latitude."

"There is no need to talk in that style," cried the other; "your acquaintance began in difficulty and distress, yet every body knows that neither of you had any sinister intentions, and accordingly there can be no objection on that score."

"The proof of our motives being innocent," replied the young lady, "depends on our not concluding this acquaintance by marriage; we shall then be consistent to the end. Were we to finish with wedlock, who would believe that we began without any views towards it? It concerns our reputation through life, and must never be—I trust that you will consider the subject in a proper light."

Perceiving that she would not listen to him, Shueyun began

pun began to be angry. "What has a girl of your age to do," exclaimed he, "with a style of talking which would better suit some decayed old pedant! However, I say nothing more to you at present; but will go and consult Teihchungyu himself. He is the person you respect above all others, and if he consents, you will hardly venture to do otherwise." So saying, away he went to call upon the youth.

Our hero was sitting quietly in the library when his page announced that the younger brother of Shueykeuyih from the adjoining house had arrived to see him. He went out to receive his visitor, and invited him to take the guest's seat. Shueyun began the discourse, by excusing himself for not calling before, on account of particular engagements: while Teihchungyu, in like manner, pleaded the state of his health for not having anticipated him. The other then opened his business, by saying that he came on purpose to make a proposal, and being asked what this might be, replied, "It is no other than the marriage of my niece."

Teihchungyu's indignation made him change colour. "You mistake, sir," exclaimed he; "I am a stranger, and should expect you to propose any subject directly to myself* rather than your niece's marriage!"

"I know,"

* The intervention of negociators is an indispensable form in a regular marriage.

" I know," said the other, " that I ought not to mention it directly to yourself; but when my niece was carried off the other day by Kwoketsu, she was indebted to your courage for her rescue, and that is my reason for making the proposal."

" What I did then," replied Teihchungyu, " was the effect of momentary indignation at a case of oppression which fell in my way—there was no premeditation in it; but what you say now you have prepared yourself for. You no doubt think that because I accepted a lodging here, I am so low and depraved a character as to allow you to propose any thing you please. I therefore take my departure at once, that you may waste no words upon me."

Shueyun perceived that he was offended, and endeavoured to pacify him. " Pray, sir," said he, " do not take amiss what I have suggested: my intention is good, and if you will only sit down and hear me out, you will be sensible that it is for the benefit of all."

" I have heard," replied Teihchungyu, " that a man of principle will neither speak of, nor listen to, what is improper in itself. You had better say nothing more, for though you may imagine there is no harm in it, my way of thinking is so different from your own, that what appears good to the one, may seem just the reverse to the other! I take my departure without asking any more questions." With this he rose from his seat, and addressing himself to one

one of the domestics of the family, said, "Pray offer my respects to your lady, and tell her, that my feelings of gratitude for her kindness could never be surpassed; but that I am prevented from taking leave of her by some insulting language which has just been addressed to me." This said, he called his page and walked out at the door.

Shueyun ran after to detain him; but the other had already got out of his reach. Confounded and abashed, he could not return to Shueypingsin. "What a silly, passionate fellow is this!" cried he—"I must give him up as my niece's husband!" So saying, he found his way home as fast as he could.

> He thought his flattering phrases needs must prove
> Welcome—nor dream'd of foul repulse and shame!
> And had not bounteous heaven his forehead arm'd
> With impudence unmatch'd, this keen rebuff
> Had stung him!

When Shueypingsin saw her uncle was determined to carry his proposal to our hero, she felt quite aware of the probable consequences. Fully prepared for his departure, and fearing lest he might not have time to provide for his journey, she put up a number of travelling requisites, together with ten taëls in broken silver, which she intrusted to a faithful domestic, desiring him to be in waiting on the outside of the city-gate, and present them to the young gentleman as he went, without seeming to know what had passed.

For ever in the rearward of th' occasion,
The blund'rer plods—t' anticipate the future
Is Wisdom's part! Where sense and spirit beam,
They deck each sex alike—Where talent shines,
In youth or age, what matter?

Teihchungyu, on his departure with his page, went straight to the monastery, and taking his station before the entrance, ordered the boy to go in and demand his travelling furniture from the priest. The latter, when he heard that he was at the door, came out in a great hurry, and with a low obeisance tried to persuade him to go in and take some tea. "I am ignorant, sir," said he, "of the cause of your late resentment and sudden departure. His worship accused me of not being attentive enough, and persecuted me in a hundred ways. He desired me to find out where you were; and since it is my good fortune to see you here again, you must not be allowed to leave us, or I shall answer for it with my life when the magistrate is informed."

"I chuse to say nothing about what has passed," exclaimed Teihchungyu; "what is it you would have the impudence to propose now? Hear me plainly; I will neither go into your monastery, nor have any of your tea; nor will I see the magistrate. Make haste and bring out my baggage, that I may proceed on my way."

"The servant has your baggage, sir," replied the priest; "but pray do not depart so hastily, and kill me with your unjust anger. I really must not let you go; pray stop, if it were only for a moment."

"What!"

"What!" cried the youth in a rage, "are you such a silly blockhead as to fancy I will be compelled to enter your monastery in broad day for the sake of being poisoned again? Let me advise you not to rely too much on the magistrate's power to protect your villainy: I have only to proceed to the proper authority to-morrow, to overwhelm a miserable priest like yourself."

While he said this, a couple of the magistrate's people came running up, with an invitation to Teihchungyu to visit their master; for the Chehëen, since his repentance, being fully impressed with the merits of the youth, was anxious to form a friendship with him. He had stationed emissaries near Shueypingsin's house to watch his movements, and as soon as these observed his hasty departure, they lost no time in making their report: upon which the magistrate despatched them at once with his message.

When Teihchungyu heard it, he burst into a loud laugh. "Why," exclaimed he, "I do not belong to this district; I owe the government no dues; what does your master mean by sending you to me? I suppose he regrets my escaping his plots last time, and begs I will go and have the account settled now."

The fellows said nothing, but at the same time seemed indisposed to let him pass; upon which he began to be in a passion, and would very soon have handled them roughly; when the people all cried out that "his worship

ship was coming;"—for the magistrate, guessing that Teihchungyu might not accept his invitation, had called for a horse, and ordering another to be brought after him, rode at a gallop to the spot, where he jumped off, and making the youth a low obeisance, "Sir," said he, "I am duly sensible of my error and blindness in not discerning your merits, and take shame to myself on that account: but awakened to sorrow and repentance, I venture to beg that you will come to my residence, and afford me at once an opportunity of atoning for my past misconduct, and evincing my future gratitude."

Hearing him speak out in this open way, Teihchungyu began to change his opinion. He returned the other's salute, and replied: "Sir," to tell you the truth, I was proceeding a few days ago to require a great deal at your hands; but being persuaded by a particular friend to abandon my design, I shall not think again of paying you a visit in your public hall. Your present style is such an improvement on the past, that I really cannot explain it:—do you adopt these manners with a view to practise some farther mischief against me?"

"Once was too often!" exclaimed the other; "do not think it can be repeated. I have not only to express my gratitude for your own indulgent forgiveness, but the kind eloquence of the young lady in my favour I can never forget."

"How?" said the youth with surprise, "what has

so suddenly wrought this favourable change in your sentiments? I own it is most surprising."

"You have been so good as to listen to me thus far," replied the Chehëen; "and I therefore venture to request your company at my residence, where I have something very particular to mention."

Observing the great change which had taken place in his manners and speech, Teihchungyu made no objection to the proposal; but mounting the other horse, rode with him briskly towards his residence. When they had arrived there, and seated themselves, Teihchungyu begged the magistrate to let him hear what he had to say without loss of time, since he had some distance to travel.

"But why are you determined to go to-day," inquired the other; "why in such haste to depart?"

"I would willingly have deferred it a day or two," replied Teihchungyu, "and taken a little time to express my gratitude to my benefactress: but a certain person insulted me with so impertinent a proposition, that I was compelled to depart."

"May I be allowed to ask what person and what proposition you allude to?" asked the magistrate.

"The person was Shueypingsin's uncle," said the youth, "and he proposed directly to myself that I should marry his niece."

"The man is bad enough," observed the other; "but there was no harm in what he proposed: why did you refuse to listen to him?"

Teihchungyu

Teihehungyu replied, " I will not deceive you; my meeting with Shueypingsin was quite accidental; but our mutual obligations became afterwards so great, that we cast off some part of the reserve which is customarily maintained between the sexes, and behaved to each other as friends. Although this has had its precedents in the heroic ages, it is not conformable with modern custom. The abrupt proposal of marriage by the uncle implied, that like ordinary persons we would effect a dishonourable union by clandestine and irregular means. I certainly could not listen to such a scheme, and therefore left him contemptuously* before he had done speaking."

" There are two ways of viewing the matter," observed the magistrate, " and I hope you will not remain so inflexible."

" How two ways?" inquired the youth.

" Had there been any thing clandestine," replied he, " it would doubtless be an abuse of the institution of marriage, to borrow it as a pretext for continuing your acquaintance; but if, on the contrary, you consider the difficulty of meeting with a worthy match, and endeavour to conclude so excellent an union, what possible objection can there be, or why need you avoid her like an enemy? I asked you to accompany me hither, well knowing that a person of your stamp was not to be bribed by gifts, nor detained by feasts and entertainments; but

* *Fŭh tsew*, ' to flap one's sleeve' in a man's face.

but a union of this kind, manifestly ordained by heaven, and to which there appears not the slightest impediment, —such a union calls for the exertion of every worthy person towards its accomplishment. Did I stand idle by, it were an unpardonable omission! This was my object in inviting you hither; and I earnestly hope you will abandon your resolution, nor allow so excellent an opportunity to escape you."

Teihchungyu sighed. "Alas! sir," replied he, "why talk in this way? The human relations* are not to be confounded: the prince and subject cannot return to the relative condition of friends; and this young lady and myself, who have proved such useful friends to each other in adversity, cannot contract the obligations of marriage. Were I to persuade myself to such a step, all that has passed between us would look like a concerted scheme: indeed it cannot be!"

"I am surprised to find you so unnecessarily punctilious," said the magistrate. "Had you been inclined to act like some pedantic moralist, you would not have gone to the young lady's house to be cured of your sickness—then why now, while every one is convinced of your rectitude, be so afraid of suspicion as to decline tying the silken knot? Your past and present conduct are at such variance, that I cannot understand you."

Teihchungyu replied, "When matters are desperate, and admit of no retreat, a virtuous man will yet retain the desire

* Vide ante, page 5, note.

desire to vindicate the purity of his character whenever occasion offers: but if he continue without necessity to act so as to excite slander, relying too much on the integrity of his motives, there is danger lest he degenerate into the vicious confidence of inferior characters. I know not for what reason, whether of good-will or enmity, you take such an interest in this business."

"My late disposition," said the magistrate, "inclined me too much to flow with the stream of corruption in matters of authority; but the danger which I incurred from your resolution to bring me to account, inspired me with fear and repentance, while the kind intercession of Shueypingsin in my favour excited my gratitude. I was led to reflect that an abuse of authority frequently leads to calamitous results, while a steady course of rectitude is attended with a peculiar satisfaction of the heart:—why, then, foolishly prejudice myself by deserting the virtuous, and taking part with the worthless side? This was the cause of my reformation. But the essence of true contrition consists in endeavouring to atone for former errors by after-acts of merit. When I perceived your superior qualities, and the more than feminine virtues of this young lady, I could not but suppose that heaven had brought you together on purpose. Had I been uninformed, then well—but as I had seen your virtues displayed in public, and heard of them in private, any omission on my part to perfect a

match which has been equalled only in romance, would have proved me unmindful of the duties of my station. It constitutes the chief obligation of my public office, and I am bound to exert all my energies to effect it. Private feelings of gratitude are a minor motive."

" Ah!" said Teihchungyu, laughing, " you make a great mistake in confessing so much—you have no objection to obtain a little credit at the expense of my being betrayed into a wrong act."

" If you say so," replied the other, " I must explain myself farther. Your fear of being betrayed into what is wrong, proves you to be a good judge of what is right. If Shueypingsin with such admirable intelligence and virtue has discomfited all the plots of her enemies, and if in recompensing your services, she has at the same time displayed the purity and excellence of her own mind, into what wrong act could you be betrayed by espousing her?"

" That is not the point," said the youth. " No regular marriage can take place without originating on the part of the parents: it is not for the parties themselves to decide. But where are mine in this case—where those of Shueypingsin? The union you propose is founded merely on what we know of each other by a casual meeting. A rightful marriage can never have such an origin as this: it might do very well for such people as Kwoketsu; but the principles which I profess will not permit me to think of it."

He now rose from his seat, and prepared to depart, when the magistrate said, " There is no time at present to enter fully into the question, but I shall be satisfied, if you do not ultimately conclude the union, that it was wrong—if you do conclude it, I shall be convinced that it was right. I entreat you will keep what I have said in mind, and you may at some future day be convinced that my proposal arose from good intentions, the result of my late repentance—not from a mean desire of flattering your wishes. Being resolved to depart, I despair of being able to detain you. An offer of any entertainment from myself, you might suspect to be treachery, and a present you would probably reject: neither of these, then, can I venture to propose; but if it be the will of heaven, I trust we may meet once more, that I may have an opportunity of proving my sincerity."

" I am much obliged to you," replied Teihchungyu, " for all you have taken the trouble to say, but your last words will be deeply treasured in my heart—many thanks, many thanks !" So saying, he took his leave, and accompanied by Seaoutan in charge of his things, sallied out at the eastern gate of the city.

> No falsehood stain'd his nature; nought could change
> His purpose—led by measur'd rule of right
> Fearless he walk'd. Alas ! that worldly chance
> No course uncheck'd permits—without his fault
> A strange mishap awaited him !

In his haste to leave the place, Teihchungyu had made no provision of any kind for the journey, and

when his page reminded him of the necessity of procuring a beast to ride, he was thrown into a perplexity. Fortunately, however, the emissary of Shueypingsin then appeared, and expressed his surprise at seeing our hero so late in that place, where he had been waiting since the morning by his lady's order. Being asked the purpose of his mission, the man replied, "When my lady saw her uncle going to visit you, sir, she was aware that he might give offence by some rude speech,* and occasion your sudden departure. She would not attempt to detain you; but fearful lest you might want time for preparation, she ordered me to be in waiting here with some supplies for your journey."

Charmed by this instance of her attention, Teih-chungyu replied, "I not only feel extremely grateful to your lady for her recollection, but her sagacious foresight and providence inspire me with the highest respect."

The servant now said he must return, and asked if there were any commands for him. "Your lady and myself," replied the youth, "met by mere chance on the highway; if I would speak of the obligations she has since conferred on me, they are too deep for expression,—if I would mention other feelings, there are none which our present situation allows me to utter. Present, however, my most respectful regards to your lady, and say that I trust she will give herself no concern about me hereafter, though for my own part I never can forget the

* This seems contrary to the injunction he had received, page 186.

the gratitude which I owe." The man then delivered what he had in charge to the page, who was directed by his master to provide a mule without loss of time, after which they proceeded on their journey towards Tongchin.

Having left their recent lodging somewhat late in the day, and lost much time at the magistrate's, it began to get dark before they had proceeded above three leagues onward. They were still nearly a league from their halting-place, when the mule on which Teihchungyu was mounted refused to stir another step on any consideration, so his rider was obliged to dismount and walk. They had proceeded in this manner a very short distance, and were just turning the angle of a wood, when they perceived running towards them, in apparent trepidation, a young man bearing a bundle on his shoulder, accompanied by a female in a blue dress, with a cloth wrapped round her head. The instant these saw the youth, they were both seized with a panic, and would have escaped into the wood; but Teihchungyu perceiving there was something extraordinary, cried out, " Where are you running away with that woman?"

The female was in such a fright that she could not stir a step, but stood stupified, screaming out to him to spare her life: while the other, not much less alarmed, abandoned his companion, and throwing away the bundle, began to run as if his existence depended on it. The youth, however, soon overtook

and

and seized him, demanding who he was, and promising to spare him if he spoke the truth. The captive fell down on his knees, and prostrating himself several times, exclaimed, "Spare my life, sir, and I will tell you every thing. This woman is mistress to a person named Letaekoong, at the village farther on; she is called Taouche,* and being resolved to desert her home, prevailed on me to bring her away, and secrete her for some time from pursuit."

"Then you make yourself out to be a rascally kidnapper!" said Teihchungyu.

"No, sir," exclaimed the other, "I am not indeed; I am the son† of Letaekoong's daughter." Being asked his name, he said it was Seuenyin.

"Are you sure you are speaking truth?" said Teihchungyu. The other loudly disclaimed all wish to deceive him, and as there seemed no reason to disbelieve what he said, the youth loosed his hold of the prisoner, who no sooner felt himself at liberty than he jumped up and ran away. Turning to where the young woman stood, Teihchungyu asked her if she were not so and so?—to which she replied in the affirmative. "Then be

* 'Peach blossom,' or 'sprig of peach.'

† The Chinese make a wide distinction between a son's and a daughter's children. The latter are called Waesun, "alien grandchildren," as belonging to another family, and having another surname:—the former, Nuysun, "domestic grandchildren," as living at home, and perpetuating the family. The children of sisters can intermarry, having different surnames;—the children of brothers cannot, having the same.

be under no alarm," said he; "I am going in the direction of your home, and will see you safely there; will that suit you?"

"If I return home," replied she, "they will accuse me of running away intentionally, and I shall have no means of clearing myself—but if you have any occasion for my services, sir, I am very ready to follow you."

Teihchungyu could not help laughing at this proposition. "Very well," said he, "follow me, and we will talk the matter over on our way." He desired his page to bring the bundle with them towards the village; and the girl, perceiving there was nothing else to be done, walked on in their company.

They had not proceeded above the tenth part of a league, before they were met by a crowd of persons running at full speed, who as soon as they came close up, and perceived the girl in company with a young man, began to cry out with one voice, "We have found them—here they are!" The party then formed themselves into a circle round the three persons, while some of their number were sent off to acquaint Letaekoong.

"Do not make such a clamour," said Teihchungyu to the crowd; "I fell in with this woman just now, and brought her on with me."

"We know nothing about that," cried they altogether; "come and explain yourself to the officer of the village."

When

When they had proceeded together a very little way, they were met by another crowd, with a blaze of torches. This proved to be no other than Letaekoong in person, who had run thither on the first summons, and seeing his mistress in company with a young and good-looking youth like Teihchungyu, presently fell into an extacy of rage. Without stopping to ask any questions, he held his fist to the stranger's breast, and began to abuse him. "You profligate thief!" cried he, "you have carried off my favourite mistress; but I will be revenged on you, or it shall cost me my life!"

"What a silly old fellow you are," said Teihchungyu pushing him on one side, "to fly into such a rage with me! Your mistress was carried off by somebody else, and I rescued her for you—instead of assailing me so rudely, you should be very grateful for the favour."

This only put the other into a greater fury. He began to roar and stamp as he exclaimed, "Who carried her off?—bring him here and let me see him—where did you meet him?—who saw it?" Then pointing first to the woman, and next to the bundle carried by the boy, "Is not this my mistress?" continued he; "is not that my property?" He now proceeded to abuse the girl, and to ask her whither she intended to run?

Seeing the humour he was in, Teihchungyu began to laugh at him. "Don't be in a passion," said he, "you see the girl is very safe!"

The

The crowd now interfered, and told the old man it was too dark to make any thing of the matter where they were—better proceed, then, to the officer of the village, and get him to elicit the truth by threats of torture. He assented to this, and they all went on in a body towards the place.

It so happened that this village officer, being a mere clerk delegated by a higher authority, was glad enough of such an occasion as the present. The moment he heard that somebody had enticed away one of the family of Letaekoong, whom he knew to be the richest man in the place, his covetousness was excited; he affected to regard it as a most serious affair, put on his cap and garment of ceremony, and ranging his fellows in order, took his seat with as much grandeur as he could assume.

They all entered in a body, and the old man, kneeling down, made the customary report of his own name, and that of his mistress, stating how the latter had been carried off while the doors were left open —how he had engaged people to pursue in different directions—and the manner in which she had been overtaken. Then pointing to Teihchungyu, "There is the person," said he, "that carried her off, but I cannot tell his name—the stolen property is here too. I entreat, sir, that you will execute the law."

The officer desired them to bring the culprit before him, and they led Teihchungyu to the front; where, being ordered to fall on his knees, he only laughed at them.

them. "It is quite enough," said he, "if I do not insist on that man kneeling to me—what do you mean by telling me to kneel to *him*?"

This infuriated the village officer, and he would have proceeded to extremities—but perceiving a dignity in the youth's carriage, which argued that he was no ordinary person, "Who may you be," exclaimed he, "that give yourself such great airs?"

"This," replied Teihchungyu, "is not the supreme court of civil jurisdiction, nor are you the proper authority to question me. Give yourself no trouble about my deportment, but try to be contented with your own humble lot."

Such a reply served only to exasperate the other, who exclaimed, "You appear before me as a criminal and a seducer—I suspect we shall alter your manners before you go."

"Pray how happen you to know," inquired Teihchungyu, "that I am the person who ran away with the woman?"

"This old man lost his mistress," replied he, "and you carried her off—if not yourself, who else should it be?"

"Good!" exclaimed the youth, "she was seen in my company, and *therefore* I carried her off! The chaste Lewheahoey himself, at this rate, was the greatest libertine that ever lived! But you are such a blockhead that I wonder who could be so blind and stupid

stupid as to depute you to this place, to make yourself ridiculous!"

Somewhat confounded, the other observed, "I judge, from the readiness and volubility of your speech, that you are somè practised and hardened offender; however, as you chuse to take these liberties on account of the smallness of my station, I shall refer you to-morrow to a higher authority; we will then see if you dare to repeat such insolence."

"No doubt," cried Teihchungyu, "your immediate superior must be the emperor himself!"

"Emperor or not," said the officer, "you will find it out soon enough when you arrive there;"—then turning to Letaekoong: "It is entirely your own fault; what business has an old man like you with such a young mistress?"

The girl herself was next desired to come forward. She was considerably past twenty, but decked out like a vulgar beauty, with a painted and bedizened face; and when the officer asked her if she had run away of her own accord, or been forced to leave her home, she held down her head and said nothing. "I shall spare you for the present," said he, "but when we have you before a higher tribunal, and give your fingers a pinch, I dare say we shall make you speak."

The old man himself was desired to take charge of both prisoners, and be answerable for their appearance on the following morning, when a petition would

would be prepared for him, and presented to the superior tribunal, where he would no doubt obtain redress for the outrage.

Letaekoong was obliged to submit, and conveyed the parties to his own house. He had seen Teihchungyu browbeat the officer, and not knowing who he might prove to be, was afraid to treat him disrespectfully. One of his best rooms was accordingly prepared for the youth, who was invited to take some refreshment. The old man would willingly have consigned the girl to the inner apartments, but, being fearful lest she might there contrive some method of confusing the evidence, he felt obliged to shut her up in the same room with Teihchungyu.

But to pursue our hero through these petty scrapes and difficulties, after he had surmounted such greater troubles, and to ascertain what happened at the next tribunal, the reader must peruse the following chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

"THEY ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE THE FAIR HEROINE, BUT ONLY EXCITE HER SCORN."

By vulgar slander would he gain his ends,
But heaven may not be blinded, nor the sun
Robb'd of his light—in vain his words he wastes
All smooth and flow'ry as they are!—with eyes
Of clearest vision, she perceives his thoughts
In their most deep recesses: while the fool
Throws by the little sense he had, and stands
A butt for scorn!

When he had thus fallen a victim to the stupid blunder of the old man, and to the annoying pomposity and insolence of the village officer, Teihchungyu hardly knew whether to feel angry or be amused:—however, on his arrival at the house of the former they presented him with refreshment, and he eat with a good appetite, without paying much attention to the cookery. He soon after desired Seaoutan to lay out his bed, and presently fell soundly asleep.

The moon was that night at the full, and when he chanced to awake he found the light streaming in through the window, and the girl, who was shut up in the room with him, sitting close by his side, and endeavouring to engage his attention. Teihchungyu started up and threw her from him, rebuking her for such behaviour.

haviour. On receiving this rebuff, the damsel would willingly have left him altogether; but that being impossible, she sat in sulky silence for some time, and then threw herself down to sleep at the foot of the bed.

Now it so happened that the old man, though he felt himself obliged to shut up the two prisoners together, could not set his mind at rest with regard to the girl, and had accordingly placed himself in ambush on the outside of the door. When he heard her put to shame by Teihchungyu, he felt convinced of the innocence of the latter. "It was the slut herself that ran away!" thought he; "I have done this youth an injury in supposing him guilty."

When daylight appeared, he would gladly have released his prisoner; but the village officer having received no money on the occasion, and being provoked moreover by the behaviour of Teihchungyu, had prepared a furious address to his superior. It therefore became necessary that the parties should be conveyed to that tribunal; and the old man called in the assistance of his neighbours, and proceeded towards the office of the superior magistrate.*

It chanced that this very morning was the birth-day of that magistrate, when all the authorities of the district went as usual to pay their respects. The doors were still unclosed, and the visitors waiting outside, when they perceived a crowd

* *Taoutae*, next in rank above a *Chefoo*.

crowd of persons escorting the prisoners towards them, and giving out that it was a case of forcible abduction.

Every body went out to observe the parties, and remarking that the appearance of the youth was greatly superior to the character which his accusers gave him, they put the question to himself, demanding who he was, and for what reason he had carried off the young woman? Teihchungyu, however, did not condescend to give them any reply; and they then turned to the girl, asking her if that young man had carried her off from home?—She, provoked by the slight which she had lately received at the youth's hands, answered very glibly in the affirmative. The same statement was repeated by her to all; and the village officer, considering the point as already settled by such excellent testimony, waited in high spirits until the doors should be thrown open, in order to produce his prisoners, and claim the approbation of his diligence.

In the midst of these self-gratulations, the Chehëen made his appearance. When his chair had been set down, that magistrate observed with astonishment his acquaintance Teihchungyu, and a young woman, surrounded by the crowd. "What is the meaning of this?" exclaimed he.

The village officer, afraid lest somebody might anticipate him, replied in a moment: "This young man, sir, forcibly carried off the female whom you see from her proper home; but being seized in his flight, together

gether with the stolen goods, I have brought him here to my superior, and claim his approbation of my exertions."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the magistrate, highly incensed. He then stated the name and quality of the youth, and how lately he had left his own district; inquiring at the same time who the female might be that dared to make such an accusation.

When the village officer understood the rank of Teihchungyu, he began to quake with fear, and to make excuses. "It was not my doing, sir," said he; "it rests entirely with the old man who made the accusation, and with the woman who confirmed it."

The Chehëen borrowed an apartment close by, and invited the youth to sit down with him, inquiring by what strange chance he had met with this adventure? Teihchungyu related his rencontre with the young man and the girl at the wood-side, upon which the magistrate exclaimed, "It is a great pity that we do not know the young man's name!"

"I happen fortunately to have heard it," said Teihchungyu; "he is the son of the old man's daughter, and his name is Seuenyin."

Letaekoong and the girl were immediately summoned, and received a lecture from the magistrate, who exclaimed, "You old villain! was it not bad enough in one so aged as you are, and so near his end, to take a young girl like this into your family; but after carelessly

lessly letting her escape, what punishment do you expect for charging an innocent traveller with carrying her off?"

"Alas! sir," replied the old man, "it was no fault of mine. When this woman was missed, they were found in company, and the crowd apprehended them both, and brought them to the village; she herself too gave her testimony to it; and I should not be blamed for what has happened."

"You old wretch!" rejoined the Chehëen, "it was your daughter's son Seuenyin that kept up a communication with this woman, and took occasion to carry her off yesterday. They happened, luckily for you, to meet with this young gentleman, who apprehended the girl and brought her back. Is this your gratitude, then, to return evil for good?"

When he heard the name of Seuenyin, the old man started. "So," exclaimed he, "was it the young thief himself that ran off with her? This was his object in coming to cajole me with his smooth speeches!" Then bending several times to the ground, he added, "There is no need of farther proof, sir;—you are perfectly right."

The magistrate would have issued a warrant for the young man's apprehension; but Letaekoong prostrated himself, and while he acknowledged that it was nothing more than the offence deserved, pleaded the death of the culprit's father, and the necessity of his assistance

to his widowed mother's maintenance, as a reason for letting him off; adding that, for his own part, he would never see him again.

The Chehëen would next have punished the female prisoner by the application of the thumbikins ;* and here the old man could venture to say nothing. But Teihchungyu interceded for her, observing that she appeared to constitute the old fellow's very existence ;† and as the other, who was fully as guilty, had been excused, she too perhaps might be pardoned. "She has behaved so ill," said the magistrate, "and afforded so bad an example, that if I were to give her fingers a good squeeze there would be no harm in it; but having the luck to meet with this young gentleman for her intercessor, she may be released without punishment."

Both the old man and the girl now humbled themselves before the Chehëen in token of gratitude, and took their departure; after which the village officer came in to pay his respects, and having received a lecture from the magistrate, was finally dismissed. The Chehëen then turned to Teihchungyu and addressed him thus: "I would gladly have detained you yesterday, sir, to dine with me; but the just causes of dislike which you had against me, and your anxiety to proceed on your journey, made me backward to propose it. I may consider the accidental detention which you have

* Vide *ante*, page 122 note.

† *Singming*, literally Ξωη και ψυχη.

have experienced from these people as fortunate for myself, since it gives me an opportunity of inviting you to partake of an entertainment. You may, perhaps, have no objection to forget the past in a little good-fellowship."

"I must own," replied Teihchungyu, "that the recollection of the past made me unwilling to defer my departure yesterday; but the eminent services and kindness which I have experienced to-day at your worship's hands, make me so willing to accept your invitation, that you would now find it more difficult to get rid of, than to detain me."

The other was delighted to hear this, and forthwith ordered an entertainment to be laid out where they were;* after which he went over to pay his respects to the superior magistrate, and then returned to dine with Teihchungyu.

> Human events in quick vicissitude
> Succeed each other; but true friendship's ties
> Gain strength from time! Ask ye why sovereign heav'n
> Thus vexes mortals?—'Tis to try their hearts,
> Like metal in the fiery crucible.

They had once before drank together; but it was on the last occasion a mere affair of ceremony, altogether devoid of the intimacy of friendship; now, however,

 they

* Every Chinese town abounds in taverns and eating-houses, whence a dinner may be had at a short notice. An invitation to dinner is called an invitation to wine. One of their red tickets is now lying before the translator, to this effect: "At six o'clock on the 7th of the 9th moon I shall prepare wine, and await the illumination of your presence."

they had become such good friends, that each pledged the other with mutual good-will; and when the wine had made them frank and communicative, the conversation, among other subjects, turned upon Shueypingsin. The Chehëen repeated his exhortations in favour of the match, to which Teihchungyu replied thus: "It is not right to dissemble between friends, and therefore I will not deceive you. When I first beheld the admirable deportment and exquisite beauty of Shueypingsin in your worship's hall, I could not help feeling touched by them, in spite of the unpleasant circumstances of the occasion; and after my retreat to the priest's residence, although the meeting had been so transient, and was so unlikely to be repeated, I could not altogether get her out of my mind. When I subsequently became ill, and my sickness had reduced me to extremity, she removed me to her house, and restored me to health, displaying a degree of kindness and attention which almost surpassed that of the nearest kindred. At the same time her conduct was so guarded and reserved, that it left no room for any sentiments except those of the deepest gratitude. I have accordingly refrained from indulging any selfish schemes whatever in relation to my benefactress. The mention of marriage makes me feel as if some act of profanation were suggested against a superior being. Your worship's first proposal really inspired me with this idea; it was no affectation of scruple on my part to attract admiration."

The Chehëen sighed. "Admitting, as you say," replied he, "that she should be treated like some superior being, there appears to myself no reason why her future life should be passed in singleness. If they think of marriage on her father's return, and after losing this chance of obtaining yourself, seek some other match, such an event would appear a much greater act of profanation than the other. Suited as you are to one another by your superior qualities, and bound together by essential services mutually rendered, it would be a dereliction of duty on my part to be aware of the truth, and not do my best to perfect the union."

"You view it in a very different light from myself, sir," said the youth: "I cannot get over my scruples." The friends had now kept up their meeting until each felt that he had drank enough; they accordingly stopped, and agreed it was best to pass the night at their lodging.

Early on the following day, as the magistrate had business at his office, and Teihchungyu was anxious to proceed on his journey, they prepared to separate without loss of time. On the eve of departure, the former took out twelve täels of silver,* and presented them

* In a country where they have no paper-money—where gold is not used as a circulating medium—and where silver, instead of being coined, is exchanged on all occasions by weight—the ordinary intercourse between buyers and sellers is attended with some inconvenience; and it is impossible for a traveller to take much money about with him. The custom of presenting money to friends is therefore the result of necessity.

them to his friend. "I have one word more of exhortation to add," said he; and when the youth begged him to speak out, he continued: "Although to one like yourself, mere literary reputation would not be much real addition, still letters should not be neglected. Instead of passing your time in unprofitable rambling, how much better would it be to acquire fame by gleaning in the field of learning." Teihchungyu thanked him cordially for his good advice, and they parted.

> At first, as water is to burning coal
> Oppos'd, they stood; but now united were
> Most intimately. When his heart had once
> Turn'd the right way, he understood the path
> Of reason.

As he proceeded on his journey, Teihchungyu could not help contrasting the present behaviour of the magistrate with his former conduct, and making reflections thereon. His thoughts then turned to Shueyping-sin. "This maiden," said he to himself, "delicate as the spring leaflet of the willow, and beautiful as the tints of the flower Haetāng,* surpasses what is related of the charms of Setsze and Maoutseang.† Then the admirable address with which she thrice discomfited Kwoketsu with such mortifying circumstances, was never surpassed by the most prudent of heroes‡ with all his wisdom.

Taken

* Pyrus Japonica.

† The first of these was a celebrated beauty, and queen of one of the petty states during the civil wars: the second was another beauty in history.

‡ Tchenping, the Chinese Ulysses, who, during the civil wars, assisted one of the contending states with his stratagems.

Taken as she was by surprise, and hurried away with violence, she yet retained her presence of mind, and when brought before the Chehëen could plead her own cause with such extraordinary courage and address!" He in like manner went over all that she had done for himself, not forgetting the kind care and foresight she evinced in despatching her servant with a supply for his journey, when the offensive behaviour of her uncle had driven him from the house—on an occasion, too, when any other person would have taken umbrage at his abrupt departure. "Among the greatest beauties of history," thought he to himself, "were Setsze and Wunkeun,* but their conduct served to debase their charms;—while on the other hand Mengkwong and Wooyen,† who were celebrated for their virtue, were not equally famous on the score of beauty. Shueypingsin, who combines every excellence in her own person, calls for the best exertions of some worthy person to obtain her, and whoever should succeed in his pursuit would doubtless be the happiest of mortals. Alas, for myself and my unhappy destiny! Living in the same age with her, suitable in years and every other respect, loving and valuing each other as we do, how untoward has been the course of events! We met in adverse

* This has been mistaken, in France, for a man's name, by construing literally the characters that compose it, and styled the 'prince of letters.'

† The first is always quoted as the pattern of wives: history says of the second, that 'her features were ugly without a parallel.'

adverse circumstances, in public conversed together without any previous intervention of friends, and sat at the same entertainment, contrary to all the rules of established custom. Thus, while we formed for each other the most generous of friendships, the possibility of a more intimate union became remoter than ever; for should we think of marriage now, our past actions would avail nothing to save our character. Did the proposal emanate from myself, I should not only become the object of general reproach, but Shueypingsin herself would despise me! Alas! my resolution is made up. We must preserve our present relation to each other, if we would avoid shame and repentance."

—" But this maiden," continued he to himself, " is not only excellent as regards her own conduct: the advice she gave me relating to my present pursuits is well worthy of consideration. She counselled me to continue my father's line of life, instead of wandering forth alone and independent to the limits of the empire. This indeed is a prescription which exactly suits my complaint: for if, instead of doing myself some credit by attainments in letters, I pass my whole time in a restless search of adventure, men will give me the character of an unsettled vagabond, until Shueypingsin herself joins in the scorn against me! I will hasten home, and prepare for the next general examination of graduates; I may perchance have the good fortune to realize the hopes of my family: and hereafter, whether I obtain

I obtain office or not, I shall be more at liberty to chuse my course of life. How much better than this unsettled and contentious existence!" His resolution thus formed, Teihchungyu took the nearest road towards his home.

> Her words were past—but yet upon his ear
> Soft accents linger'd, and each transient scene
> Gone by, still serv'd to agitate his breast:
> Devotedness like his exists in semblance,
> But none in deep degree.

When Shueypingsin, after waiting for some time, found that the domestic whom she had despatched did not return, she began to fear lest some mischief had befallen him; and was already in a state of painful suspense, when towards the close of day her steward appeared, and having explained the causes of his delay, made a verbal report of his proceedings, and of the message with which he had been charged by Teihchungyu. She listened in silence, and when she had dismissed the servant, soliloquized thus: "The timely succour which he lent me has spirited up against him some mortal enemies, and exposed him to the worst dangers: but I have happily sent him away safe at last, and may now set my heart at rest on *his* account!—Let me not forget, however, that Kwoketsu is still combined with my uncle for mischief: they will not forget what has passed, and it will require all my attention to counteract their plots."

Fortunately for her, the haughty and unceremonious departure

departure of Teihchungyu had so annoyed her uncle, that he did not venture to pay her another visit for some days. One morning, however, he came over in high glee to see the young lady. "Niece," said he, "have you heard the strange news?" She pleaded the retired life of a female, in her situation, as a sufficient reason for being ignorant of what was passing abroad. "Well then," continued her uncle, "you must know that when I advised you to marry Teihchungyu, I had the best opinion of his character; but you were fortunately steady in refusing a hasty assent. Your happiness might otherwise have been ruined for life! Can you guess what sort of person he has proved himself to be?"

"I know nothing of his birth and family," replied the young lady; "but from what I have observed of his conduct, it would plainly appear that he is a young man of extraordinary virtue."

"Of extraordinary virtue indeed!" exclaimed the other impatiently; "you used to have a great share of penetration once, niece; what has become of it on this occasion?"

"In what way has he belied his former character?" inquired Shueypingsin.

"Why, he is nothing better than a practised seducer," replied her uncle; "I know not what schemes he might have had in view when he pretended sickness, and gained a lodging in this house; but you may consider

sider it the height of good luck on your part that he was obliged, by the sound rating I gave him, to desist, and took his departure in an affected passion. The earthen pitcher, however, gets broken at last, and no sooner did he reach the neighbouring village than he betrayed himself."

"Pray what was it he did to betray himself?" asked the young lady.

"A person of some wealth in that neighbourhood," replied he, "has a young mistress, of whom he is extremely fond; but whom this youth, by some unknown device, contrived to seduce away and carry off: unluckily for him that person happens to maintain a great number of idle retainers, who presently gave chase in all directions, and very soon overtook the fugitives. They first of all beat him until he was half dead,* and then carried him before the village officer. Now if he had possessed any discretion, and humbled himself before the man in authority, he might possibly have been let off after a gentle correction—though I will not answer for even that; but, strange to say, he had the extreme folly, although in this unhappy predicament, to put on a blustering air and provoke the officer, who became so enraged that he has carried him before his superior. Every one declares that there is no doubt of

* The old gentleman's amplification is evident: he is one of those who 'de magnis majora loquuntur.'

of his guilt, and he must be banished* beyond the frontier."

"Where did you hear all this, uncle?" inquired Shueypingsin.

"When his worship the Chehcëen," replied Shueyun, "went to visit the Taoutae on his birth-day, his followers learned these particulars, which were afterwards transmitted to myself."

"Well," said his niece, smiling composedly, "let Teihchungyu be what you say he is,—it concerns myself no more than if the favourite disciple† of Confucius had really been a murderer."

"I know it does not concern you," exclaimed he; "but this event proves how very difficult it is to be sure of a person's character on a short acquaintance, and that, to avoid the chance of being deceived, one's knowledge must be better founded than on a casual meeting."

"In a matter with which I have so little concern," observed Shueypingsin, "there is not much occasion to argue the point; but what you have been pleased to say seems intended to ridicule my want of penetration, in forming a wrong opinion of this young man. Did it refer

* There are two kinds of exile, of which the principal is banishment into Tartary, and condemnation to slavery, or military service—the other is temporary exile to the distance of 300 leagues from the culprit's home.

† Named Tsengsen—allusion to a passage in one of their classics.

refer to any person but himself, I should not think it worth while to say a word in reply; but after the mutual services we have rendered each other, the slur you throw upon his character implies that our acquaintance was dishonest, and slanders his reputation equally with my own: I have therefore a good reason for repelling it."

"I do not know," cried her uncle, "whether to be most angry or amused by what you say. I never had any cause of enmity towards this young man; what should make me slander him, then? He happens to be a libertine, and entices away a young woman: you live quietly at home, and know nothing about it; but the people near the magistrate's office report it to me. Why blame me on *their* account? If you chuse to say that you mistook his character, and that this was a thing you could not help, I can understand you:—but if you attempt to maintain that he really is not guilty, I suspect all the water in the yellow river will never wash him clean from the imputation."

"If I think it worth while to maintain any thing," replied Shueypingsin, "it will be that he is not what you call him, and that the whole is the slanderous invention of worthless people. You may then learn that I was not deceived in my good opinion: any other point I do not think it necessary to argue."

"My good niece, you are very obstinate," said Shueyun: "that he *is* guilty has been proved by a number

number of witnesses; what is there for *you* to say on the subject?"

"You assert that it has been proved by witnesses," answered she, "and until we hear something authentic on the subject, I will not debate the point with you; but, judging from reason and principle, I must still maintain that this young man cannot be what you say: and though such a report may have gone abroad, admitting that it is not a fabrication altogether, there must yet be something more in it than has come to light—for should he really prove to be guilty of the charge, I will engage to forfeit both my eyes to you."

"Why, the woman he carried off has been apprehended in his company," exclaimed Shueyun, "and taken before the village officer, who transferred them both to his superior. They are now on trial: there can be no fabrication in *this*. Your attempt to vindicate his character after matters have reached this point, only proves that you are blinded by excess of love."

"It is vain attempting to persuade you at present, uncle," said the young lady; "but do not be too positive. If you will only inquire a little farther, you may arrive at the real truth."

"Inquire farther or not," replied he, "Teihchungyu is nothing better than a seducer. Since you are obstinate, however, and wish me to make farther inquiries, there is no harm in so doing, it is only the loss of a few hours—let that rest: but as you argue from reason and

principle

principle that he cannot be guilty, pray let me hear how you attain to that conclusion?"

"These two words, reason and principle," said his niece, "are of a mysterious nature. Those to whom they have been revealed can comprehend them; but they will still remain unintelligible to all others. It is very difficult to explain them to people who possess neither reason nor principle;*—but as you have asked me, I must speak out. Now reason has taught me to distinguish between virtuous and vicious conduct, and that all those whose actions and conversation are regulated by virtue, must be incapable of the reverse. I have observed Teihchungyu, from the public hall of justice to the private dwelling,—that no action or word was contrary to virtue and propriety. Unless endowed with the natural gift of right reason, he could not have behaved thus; and such being the case, to say that he can be guilty of a charge like this is absurd and impossible. I distinguish likewise between selfish and disinterested principle, and judge that truly generous characters are incapable of selfish conduct. From my first meeting with this young man until his final departure, I saw that his exertions to rescue me were perfectly disinterested, and in favour of a mere stranger. Unless the principles of his conduct were the very opposite of selfish, he could not have acted thus; and such being the case, to pretend that he can be a selfish seducer is altogether

* This was the unkindest cut of all.

gether impossible and absurd. My opinion of him, being well grounded, is positive, and the fear of death should not make me change it. But if what you charge against him were true, it would prove that nature * had been a blunderer in the constitution of the human race; it would imply that all the maxims of the sages were founded in error, and must accordingly be false. The popular maxim prefers the evidence of sight to that of hearing;—do not be in such a hurry to laugh at me, but go and inquire once more. Should you really be able to establish all that has been alleged against this young man, it will not be too late for your triumph; but until that be done, it is unfair to judge of such a person by the opinions of worthless people."

"Well," said her uncle laughing, "if you chuse to pursue a subject which should be so unpleasant to you, I will go and make further inquiry, and then hear what more you have to say."

"Uncle," replied the young lady with a smile, "I hope you will not fail to return, even though the inquiry turn out unlucky for yourself."

As Shueyun took his departure, he could not help exclaiming to himself, "How is it that this young girl possesses such sense and penetration! What, if all I have heard should be really false?—But let me go straight to the magistrate's and ascertain."

On

* *T'hëen te seng jin*, literally, 'heaven and earth in the production of mankind.'

On his arrival there, he saw one of the people attached to the office, and learned from him that a young man had really been apprehended in company with the woman who ran away—but as this account was confused by the addition, that the young man so apprehended was not the person that had enticed her away, Shueyun interrogated a lad who was attached to the magistrate's person. He then learned the whole truth, and, struck with astonishment, ejaculated to himself, "This girl without joking is a most extraordinary person! What I believed to be most true, she had the ready hardihood to maintain was decidedly false, and offered to forfeit her eyes in the event of being mistaken. At my departure, too, she hinted her suspicion that I should not like to return, when the unpleasant truth was known.—How I triumphed over her at first! I truly have not the face* to go back to her just now!" After some hesitation, "Let me go," thought he to himself, "and consult with Kwoketsu; something or other may yet turn up."

He proceeded straight to his son-in-law, and reported every circumstance as it occurred. "Sir," said the other, "do not concern yourself so much about the truth or falsehood of this affair. To achieve any thing on such an occasion as this, a little invention

* *Mo lien tsuy:* the Chinese expression is literally our's in this place.

is indispensable, and though the report be *false*, we must speak and act just as if it were *true*. This Teihchungyu has done enough, to admit of our adding a little more, and we may give a colouring to the circumstances, without the absolute imputation of lying."

"Who minds lying?" cried Shueyun,—"not I! But unfortunately there are no lies for us to tell on this occasion."*

"Oh," said the other, "if that is all, I can easily accommodate you. What need of more than a few verses to lampoon him, which you may declare came from some person unknown. These you may shew to your niece; and let there be ever so many witnesses of the real truth, who shall disprove it?"

"A very good scheme," observed Shueyun,—"but who is to make the verses?"

"Who else but myself," replied his son-in-law,—"the accomplished scholar and man of genius, Kwoketsu!"

"If you will undertake the task, so much the better," said the other, "but as soon as they are composed, pray write them out for me."

"There is not much in their composition," observed Kwoketsu, "and I will repeat them to you; but

* It may be perceived, that the characters of these two worthies are in strict keeping throughout.

but as to the writing, I will not answer for being able to do that myself."

"Let us hear them first," said Shueyun; "we may put them on paper afterwards."

The other now proceeded to rehearse the verses,* and Shueyun clapped his hands with delight. "Very good indeed!" cried he, "very good! I am only afraid that the last two lines may betray too much,† and excite a suspicion of yourself being the author;—better omit them."

"Let them suspect what they please!" said Kwoketsu, "Those two lines are of great consequence, and must not be omitted."

"Very well," answered the other,—"but this must be written out before I can shew it to her."

"That is easily done," said the young man, so calling a domestic of the family who could write, he dictated the lines, and when they were finished, presented them to Shueyun. "If you will shew her this paper, sir, it may serve to break down her delicate pride a little. Should she consent

* The lines themselves, twenty-eight in number, are intended by the author to be very stupid and miserable, as proceeding from so illiterate a person. Their whole point consists in their abusiveness, and in the recurrence of the same word or character at the end of every line, which it was found impossible to preserve in English; and as many of them were absolutely untranslateable from their shocking grossness, it was judged best to omit them altogether.

† They convey a hint that the young lady should marry Kwoketsu.

to have me, then well; but if she gives herself any fine airs, the new imperial commissioner is already appointed, and happens to be a pupil of my father's. I shall court her no more myself, but persuade the commissioner to take upon himself the absolute disposal of her person, and on the ground of her father having no son to succeed him, authorize me to marry her at her own house, instead of bringing her home to mine. We will then see what she can do to escape me!"

Shueyun by no means relished this scheme. "If you do that," observed he with alarm, "the whole property must become your own, and our family estate will be lapsed for ever. Let me beg you to espouse her in the usual manner."

The other could not help laughing at his fright. "You take me too strictly at my word. My only object in adopting this plan is to get possession of her person—that being secured, I shall bring her home. Think you my family is so miserably poor, that we must be coveting the property of your's, or wishing to become their heirs?"

Shueyun was delighted. "It is just what I should have expected from you," cried he; "but wait while I go and shew her these lines; if she is offended, I will mention the commissioner's visit and its consequences. There is little fear of her persevering after that."

" Lose no time," exclaimed Kwoketsu with impatience.—" I wait here for good news !"

Shueyun took his departure with the verses to call upon his niece—but to see her virtue triumphant over every trial, as pure gold survives its fiery test, the reader must proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

"BY HER APPEAL TO THE EMPEROR, SHUEYPINGSIN TERRIFIES THE COMMISSIONER."

When peals the thunder in the echoing void,
Then quake the hollow-hearted! Th' innocent
Alone unscar'd may listen—while the knave,
Full fraught with memory of darkest deeds,
Expects each bolt will on his head descend!
How gladly would he close the long account
Of evil render'd—how unwillingly
Augment it by an item!

On reaching the house of his niece with the verses invented by Kwoketsu, Shueyun addressed the young lady thus: "I wish now that I had not gone to inquire farther concerning that young man, for his guilt might still have remained unknown to us; but you insisted on my going, and the result is very unfavourable." His niece begged to be informed, and he continued: "Had I remained quiet, we should have heard the rumour of his being a seducer—still, however, it was a mere rumour; but now such clear and decided proof has been afforded of his guilt, that it not only disgraces himself, but involves us too, with whom he lately lodged."

"What is the proof?" inquired Shueypingsin.

"On my arrival at the magistrate's," replied he, "I found that some busy person had already made the guilt

guilt of Teihchungyu the subject of a satirical poem, and pasted it up on every wall. Thinking that you might not believe me, I pulled down one of these, and brought it with me, that you might learn what sort of character he really is." So saying he presented her with the paper; which she had no sooner looked over, than, to his surprise, she began to laugh excessively.

"Uncle," said the young lady, "I congratulate you! How lately have you taken to your studies, to be able to indite such fine poetry as this?"

"Alas!" exclaimed he, "how should I attempt to deceive *you* on such a point, whatever I might do with others! When did you know me capable of making verses?"

"Well," answered his niece, "if you were not the author of these verses, I am quite sure that they proceeded from the masterly pencil of Kwoketsu."

"Do not be so unjust," cried he, beginning to rave and stamp in despair; "whatever people may say, he has not a bit more learning than your uncle! *His* masterly pencil! why he cannot so much as write: do not persist in calling him the author."

"He may not be able to *write*," said the young lady, "but he may *dictate* for all that."

"But he has no quarrel with this young man," interrupted her uncle, "that should induce him to take the trouble of composing such a satire."

"That may possibly be true," replied she, "still he is well

well aware that there *is* such a person as Teihchungyu; while every body else in the neighbourhood is unacquainted with, and would hardly, therefore, think of lampooning him. The deception is too gross. I may be a weak and silly girl, but such a low and vulgar production as this can make no impression on me; let me advise the author, then, to waste no more pains."

Her tone was so decided that Shueyun dared not press her farther on that subject. "We will let that rest," said he;—"but I have something yet to tell you, which demands your serious consideration." Being requested to explain himself, he continued: "It is simply this; Kwoketsu cannot give you up, although the want of power on the part of the local authorities has induced him to defer his pursuit; yesterday, however, he learned that the newly appointed imperial commissioner is a favourite pupil of his father the minister, and only waits his arrival in order to obtain his interference. His plan is to come and marry you in your own house.* Now your father being an exile on the frontier, without any means of communication, and I myself

* This mode of espousal is called *jŏchuy*, and occurs when a rich man, having only daughters, adopts a son-in-law to succeed to his property. "The bridegroom, who instead of taking home the bride to his own house, lives with her at the house of her parents, by so doing deviates from the established forms of espousal; but having been once so received as a son-in-law, the law protects him in the right which he has acquired, of either remaining there with his wife, or taking her away with him to a separate establishment."—STAUNTON's *Penal Code*. Book III. sect. 104, *Note*.

myself a person of no official rank or influence, what can a young girl like yourself do to oppose his designs?"

"The imperial commissioner," replied his niece, "is the delegate of his majesty for the general investigation and redressal of wrongs. Should he countenance a forced marriage out of blind devotion to his ancient tutor, and violate the sanctity of the marriage relation, he will become a mere instrument of injustice, instead of the emperor's delegate for the promotion of good government. But who shall venture to incur the stern rigour of the penal laws? Set your heart at rest, uncle—as for myself, I have no apprehensions.

"It is very well for you to talk in that way to *me*," said he, laughing; "but I suspect that when you come before the commissioner, the weight of his authority, and the prospect of near punishment, will give you real cause of fear."

"The violation of the laws to evil and cruel purposes," replied Shueypingsin, "may make the frail humanity of a worthy and exalted character tremble; but such natural feelings will never compel it to descend from its moral elevation: for being governed by a fixed principle of rectitude, the presence* of the emperor himself,

* Literally "the sight of the emperor himself." This is precisely "Justum et tenacem propositi virum—non *vultus instantis tyranni* mente quatit solidâ." The above is the language of the Confucians, or stoics, who are in fact the only sect in China with any pretensions to morality. The Budhists combine superstition with depravity;—and the Taousze are mere cheats and jugglers.

self, much less his delegate, will never force such a character to degrade itself. Why then permit your apprehensions of these worthless people's power and influence to govern your conduct?"

"Power and influence," said her uncle, "are what the greatest persons of past and present times have not been able to shake off; why then couple them with the worthless only? I am ready to acknowledge myself one of the worthless order, who are subject to their sway; but suspect, at the same time, that I seek my real advantage thereby."

"Well," observed she smiling, "if that be the case, let me ask what great advantage you have ever derived from them?"

"I see you are disposed to laugh at me," said he; "but though my devotion through life to persons of power and influence may not have advanced me, I have certainly never suffered by such a course. I am only afraid that the contempt which you profess for them will lead you into trouble; and when the time arrives you must not say that I gave you no warning."

To this his niece replied, "The proverb says well, 'the winter insect must not talk of summer:—the ephemeris* never knows spring and autumn.' We are all best acquainted with the nature of our own situations. Let me beg you, uncle, to mind your own affairs: your niece knows that there are such things as propriety, virtue,

* *Hoeykoo.*

virtue, reputation, and self-government. In comparison with these, happiness and misery are indifferent to her. Pray then give yourself no uncalled-for anxiety on my account."

Shueyun now perceived that all his attempts to persuade her were vain, so assuming an air of well-intentioned honesty, he told his niece, that the pains he had taken to convince her were for her good, and he grieved much that she would not listen to him. With that he left her; but on his way out could not help soliloquizing thus: "She neither credits my attempts to defame this youth, nor fears any threats regarding the commissioner;—truly there seems to be no remedy! Yet my brother, who is in exile, may remain there for any length of time; and shall the whole family property stay quietly in the possession of this young girl? If the commissioner is coming, I must stir up Kwoketsu to proceed to extremities, and when all parties are embroiled by my suggestions, I may take occasion to benefit myself."

With this resolution he proceeded straight to Kwoketsu, whom he informed of what had passed between his niece and himself; and then asked the other if he did not think she was very provoking. Kwoketsu was much enraged. "Well," cried he, "let her talk in this style for the present. Wait till the commissioner arrives, and when I have sent in my memorial, we will see whether he chuses to support me, the son of a minister

minister of state—or your niece, the daughter of a banished member of the military tribunal."

"Could you only forget her," replied Shueyun, "we might avoid these unpleasant discussions with my niece, and the humiliation we are obliged to suffer from her; but if you cannot give her up, our only course is to wait for the commissioner. We will seize on her with a strong hand, and secure her beyond the chance of escape: then let her resort to all her stratagems, she can. But submit at last; but if we go on debating the point with her, think you she will ever* 'descend from her high horse'?"

Kwoketsu assented, and their conference being thus ended, they parted. After the lapse of a couple of months, the new commissioner was said to be approaching. Kwoketsu hurried out to a great distance on the road to meet him, and when they had reached his residence, and burnt incense to the emperor, the great man's arrival was welcomed by him with rich gifts.

The first press of business being over, Kwoketsu prepared an entertainment, and invited the commissioner. The latter could not but accept it from the son of his tutor and superior, and when they had drank a certain quantity of wine, the great man, moved by the attentions of his host, said to him, "On my first arrival, it has been out of my power to make any return for your kindness: but should you have any wish which

* Literal.

which I can gratify, I shall of course be glad to accede to it."

"Sir," replied the other, "the majesty of your public office, which inspires all under your authority with awe, would deter me from offering any thing private to your notice; but there is a matter which touches me nearly, in which I would beg your lordship to arbitrate and govern."

"What may it be," inquired the commissioner, "that touches you so nearly?"

"My father," said the young man, "has been so engrossed by public business as to be unable to pay due attention to his family, and I have as yet never proceeded beyond the inferior connexion, nor been able to espouse a rightful wife."*

"That is strange!" exclaimed his friend with surprise. "Did not I hear that you had sent the marriage presents, and were regularly contracted?"

"I did no more than send the presents," replied the other, "and the lady has since changed her mind."

The commissioner smiled. "Why, this is still more extraordinary! With your father's elevated dignity, and your own youth and flourishing prospects, who is there but would gladly tie the silken net with you?—Who may this lady be?"

"The

* He wishes to pretend that his spouse is only a handmaid, of whom a man may have as many as he pleases, subordinate to the *Tse*, or rightful wife, of whom he can only have one—his equal in rank, and espoused with the proper forms.

" The daughter of Shueykeuyih, member of the military tribunal," answered Kwoketsu.

" But this Shueykeuyih is in exile," observed his friend;—" who is it that presides in his family during his absence, and sanctions this breach of the contract?"

" The mother is dead," replied the young man, " and there is none but the daughter herself to preside in the family."

" But how should a young girl like her presume to change her mind?" said the commissioner; " I suppose she was not aware of the contract."

" Allowing her to be ignorant of the first proposal," answered the other, " I still engaged a regular negociator of the match, observed the six ceremonials,* and sent the presents, which were all accepted; could she be ignorant after this?—but when it came to the point she made a thousand objections, and evaded the match in a multitude of ways."

" That being the case," observed his friend, " why did you neglect to call in the authority of the two local magistrates?"

" I did engage their assistance," replied he, " but she thought very lightly of them, and treated them with contempt and indifference. I have, therefore, no resource but to intreat you to assume your irresistible

* For the six ceremonials see Morrison's Dictionary, page 692. These are in practice now reduced to three,—making the proposal,—sending the presents,—and carrying the bride home.

tible authority, and tame for me the delicate pride of this high-bred lady. When I have perfected this desirable union, my gratitude will not be small—and she can scarcely venture to offer any opposition."

"It is a fine match," said the commissioner, "and I consider it my duty to assist you; but I fear the negociators might not have been sufficiently respectable, or the presents not clearly accepted; in case you proceeded to carry her home irregularly, it were very unadvised."

To this Kwoketsu replied, "The Chehëen was negociator on the occasion, and the contract was made by him in person. Her father being in exile, Shueyun, her uncle, received the marriage presents; all these circumstances are universally known—how then shall she dare to provoke your lordship by her mad obstinacy?"

"That being the case," observed the commissioner, "there is nothing to be said. To-morrow I will prepare an order, authorizing you to carry her home as your wife."

"But she may refuse to enter the chair," said the other, "or throw some other difficulties in the way; let me beg you to authorize my espousing her at her own house; she can hardly refuse me then." The commissioner nodded assent, and when they had finished their wine in high mirth, they separated.

In a day or two the following paper was addressed to the Chehëen.

" The commissioner's order. Marriage, being the source of all the human relations, and possessing the greatest influence on the public morals, should not be delayed beyond the fit period. It is stated that Kwoketsu, son of the minister, has been long contracted to the daughter of Shueykeuyih, member of the military tribunal. The Chehëen, it appears, was engaged as negociator, and by him the six ceremonials were duly observed. These preliminary rites being fulfilled, it is proper to conclude the marriage forthwith. But as the father of the bride is absent, let her be espoused at her own house. I request the Chehëen to convey my instructions to both parties; let them chuse a fortunate day without loss of time, and proceed to conclude the joyful rites. Delay not the favourable period, to the detriment of so auspicious a union. A month is limited for the completion of the nuptials, and let none of the parties be dilatory, at their peril."

When the Chehëen received this and considered it attentively, he was aware that it must be the work of Kwoketsu, relying on the commissioner's connexion with his father. That magistrate would at first have presented a public address, but feared the young man's resentment—he would then have held his peace altogether, but here again he apprehended that the commissioner, in treating Shueypingsin too lightly, might get himself into trouble, and then reproach him for

for not giving him warning. He accordingly wrote a private note to the following effect:

"I certainly acted as negociator in proposing this match; but it was at the desire of Kwoketsu and the young lady's uncle Shueyun, in opposition to the wishes of the young lady herself. It has therefore remained unconcluded. I have received your lordship's directions, and it is my duty to respect them; but considering the determined resolution of Shueypingsin to remain single, and the address with which she has constantly eluded marriage, I am fearful lest, in receiving the order, she might assume the pride of her rank, and wound your lordship's dignity by her refusal. I therefore make this representation of the truth, and wait for farther commands."

"What!" exclaimed the great man in a rage, "am not I, with the authority of imperial commissioner, a match for this young girl?" He accordingly issued a second order.

"The Commissioner again sends instructions to the Chehëen. If, according to his statement, Shueypingsin were averse from the match, for whom did that magistrate act as negociator, and settle the contract? Does he not contradict himself? He ought to have communicated my order instantly to Shueypingsin, who, being the daughter of an officer in disgrace, could hardly presume to offer any opposition. Should she prove disobedient, let her be brought before my

tribunal, that I may interrogate and punish her. Obey this mandate."

On observing the peremptory strain in which this second paper was worded, the Chehëen judged that he could no longer consider the rights of the question, but must proceed to obey his orders. He first communicated the commissioner's instructions to Kwoketsu,—who of course very readily assented,—and then went on to the residence of Shueypingsin. He left his chair at the door, and walked into the great hall, desiring a servant to inform the young lady that he had come on business from the commissioner, and wished to speak with her.

Shueypingsin, when she heard the message, became aware that they had executed their threatened intention, and walked out, attended by two female slaves, towards the back of the hall, where she took her station behind a hanging screen. The magistrate, being informed that the young lady waited his instructions within, addressed himself in the direction of the screen: "The business on which I come, young lady, is no other than the marriage which Kwoketsu wishes to conclude with you. He employed me as negociator, but your unwillingness has hitherto proved an obstacle. The newly arrived commissioner being a pupil of his father, Kwoketsu has engaged his authority to effect the match; and his lordship, not fully aware of the whole truth, has issued a paper, requiring me to transmit

his

his directions to both parties, who are to chuse a fortunate day, and complete the nuptials as a public example. Thus compelled, I have communicated the order to Kwoketsu, who received it very joyfully; and now convey the same to yourself, young lady, begging that you will obey his lordship and make early preparations."

To this Shueypingsin replied from within the screen, "It does not befit me to decline the marriage; but without my father's authority I am unwilling to make choice of a husband, and therefore trust your worship will represent my case."

"I stated the circumstance to his lordship on receiving the order," said the magistrate, "but he surprised me by an answer in which I myself was severely rated, and the language was so peremptory that I could only transmit his commands. Whether you resolve to obey or not, it should be done with deliberation—as for myself, I do not pretend to control you."

On her requesting to see the two papers, the magistrate desired his clerk to hand them to the female attendants; and when the young lady had read them attentively, she replied, "My unwillingness to marry Kwoketsu is not a matter of choice, for were I to take it upon myself to wed during my father's exile, and he found fault with me on his return, there would remain no excuse for my conduct. These mandates of the com-

missioner are so absolute, that it is impossible, especially for a helpless girl like myself, to dispute them, —and I can hardly be charged with following my own inclinations on the occasion. But yet, should they be returned to his lordship on the conclusion of the marriage, and he himself be recalled to court, no proofs will remain in my own justification. May I request your worship, therefore, to obtain them for me. My father will then perceive that my present compliance proceeded from a necessary submission to authority, and not from any wish of my own to conclude the marriage."

"You are very provident, replied the magistrate, —"I will address the commissioner, and procure his sanction to your retaining the two papers."

The conversation thus ended, he rose and returned to his office. "I have been trying," thought the magistrate, "to effect a match between this young woman and Teihchungyu; but she, who a little while ago would not listen to the proposal of marrying his rival, is now quite ready with her consent, and asks only to retain the commissioner's order!—I really cannot understand it. His power, then, has prevailed at last! However, if *she* gives up the point there is nothing to be said, and I must address his lordship according to her desire."

When he read the paper which the Chehëen presented, the commissioner laughed aloud. "Why, they

they told me," exclaimed he, "that this young lady was very scrupulous—how happens it that her scruples vanish so suddenly at the sight of my order?" The following answer was accordingly returned.

"It is stated that Shueypingsin, in the absence of her father's authority, is unwilling to be responsible for the pending match, and begs to retain my order in her own justification. Her filial conduct is very praiseworthy. But the fragrant season must not be lost; let the marriage be speedily concluded, as an excellent example. The two previous orders may be retained in evidence."

The Chehëen went in person to deliver this to Shueypingsin, and, as he rose to depart, counselled her thus: "The matter now rests with the commissioner, and not with Kwoketsu: you cannot possibly alter your mind. It is incumbent on you to prepare yourself; and when Kwoketsu has chosen a fortunate day, I will come again to inform you."

"It is very true," replied the young lady, "that the matter now rests with the commissioner, and I cannot presume to change my mind—but I suspect that when his lordship has considered awhile, he may be disposed to change *his own* mind."

"He is the protégé of a minister of state," observed the magistrate, "and secure of his patron's zealous aid: what should induce *him* to change?"

"I do not pretend to answer for him," said Shueypingsin,

pingsin; "but should he really remain inflexible, it will be quite impossible for *me* to avoid the marriage, however much I may wish to escape it."

The magistrate took his leave and proceeded to Kwoketsu, whom he called upon to select a fortunate day for the conclusion of the nuptials. That young man, on finding that Shueypingsin had consented, could not disguise the excess of his joy—he began immediately to prepare himself, and here we leave him for the present.

> Say ye the peach blossoms are blown,* and ask
> What stops the bridal?—Know the birds must pair
> Or willingly, or never.—Swarms of fowl
> Flit round the river-islet; but none wed,
> Save kind with kind.

The commissioner was not displeased to see the young lady yield to his authority, as it gave him an opportunity of obliging his patron's son. After the lapse of a few days he opened the gates of his tribunal for the reception of appeals, and his court was soon filled with some hundreds of persons, who crowded in with their memorials, and knelt down in the entrance way. The commissioner directed that their petitions should be received, and the parties themselves dismissed until a reply could be returned: upon which the crowd dispersed in a body, and there remained behind only a single person

* Here are allusions to two or three odes in the Sheeking. 'The season of peach blossoms' poetically means spring, or that of marriage: —'the river-islet birds' are figurative of persons about to be wedded.

person—a young woman, who still knelt immoveably in her place. The attendants of the court desired her rudely to depart; but she rose, and advancing a few steps forward, knelt down as before. "I have provoked his lordship," cried she, "and do not wish to avoid death. I desire only to end my life here, as a public example, and in vindication of the dignity of the imperial commissioner."

So saying, she took out a glittering poniard from her sleeve, and was going to stab herself on the spot; but the commissioner, seeing her from where he sat, called out in alarm to his attendants to prevent her. He then inquired who she was, and the nature of her complaint, desiring that she would not be rash, but state her griefs plainly, in order to their being redressed.

"The guilty person you see before you," replied she, "is the daughter of the exiled Shueykeuyih, late member of the military tribunal. Only seventeen years of age, my mother long since dead, and my father in exile;—living in desolate and solitary seclusion, and mourning* my unhappy lot,—the idea of marriage was farthest from my thoughts. But the wicked Kwoketsu concerted a hundred schemes to get possession of my person, and by several villainous attempts, had nearly succeeded in conquering my unprotected weakness. He now takes advantage of his family influence to revive his wolfish schemes, and would cause the unsullied gem to

* Literally, 'eating bitter herbs, and drinking my tears.'

to meet with disgrace. Weeping I reflect, that although my father be in exile, he is of elevated rank; and though I myself be an insignificant individual, my cause is that of all secluded females. It is a case in which the established rites and the cause of morality are deeply concerned. How then shall I, without my father's consent on the one hand, and without the intervention of negociators on the other, so far lose myself, as to bury my reputation through a dread of unjust power! The late violence of Kwoketsu, though troublesome, was but the attempt of some petty robber, against whom precautions might avail: but he has now abused the authority of the commissioner, who is delegated by the imperial bounty, and procured a public order, by which the established rites and the cause of morality are treated with contempt and outrage. The dread of so much power deprived me of all courage and presence of mind. I knew that if I attempted to preserve my honour, my family and myself must fall victims to unjust influence—but to die once is nothing in comparison with the loss of virtue! No earthly resource was left to me; but, resolved to sacrifice my life in vindication of my wrongs, I despatched, on a certain day, my domestic slave to the imperial palace, to strike on the drum, and present my complaint. But doubtless the consciousness of wrong must have led an inexperienced maiden like myself to use expressions, too little respectful, and too well calculated to involve me

in

in guilt towards his majesty. I know that my offence admits not of pardon, and therefore throw myself before your lordship's tribunal, and cheerfully yield up my life."

So saying, she raised the poniard once more to stab herself. The commissioner had paid little regard to her account of Kwoketsu's violence—but when he heard that she had despatched a domestic to the emperor's palace he was seized with dread, and seeing her ready to kill herself, cried out to a young lad* by his side to rush forward and prevent her.

"There is a great deal in your case," said he, "which it was impossible for me to be acquainted with; but let me ask you, since the Chehëen declares that he himself was negociator for your marriage, how say you there was *no* negociator?"

"The ceremonies," she replied, "which were performed by the Chehëen, were for the daughter of my uncle Shueyun. She has long since been espoused by Kwoketsu as his rightful wife.† How then could the Chehëen's intervention be on account of *my* marriage also?"

"What!" exclaimed the commissioner,—"then he has already taken a wife! This being the case, you should have explained the truth to me—what made you so rashly address the emperor?"

"If my presenting an ordinary petition," said Shueypingsin,

* On account of her sex and rank. † See Preface.

pingsin, " could have set the matter right, your lordship should not have proceeded with such certainty on the strength of Kwoketsu's mere assertions. Had I not addressed his majesty, my wrong would never have been righted."

" But the province of marriage," replied he, " pertains to the local authorities; how could you presume to refer it to the emperor? Your address no doubt contains some irrelevant matter, and if so, who do you think will be the sufferer?"

" I could scarcely fail," said she, " to weigh well my expressions in petitioning his majesty; but I have the copy here, and beg* your lordship to inspect it." So saying, she took the paper from her bosom and handed it up to the commissioner, who read as follows:—

" Shueypingsin, the offending daughter of Shueykeuyih, late member of the military tribunal, but now in exile on the frontier, reverently addresses his majesty—the purport of her petition being the unjust conduct of the provincial Commissioner, who in order to seek favour with his patron, has endeavoured to compel the youthful daughter of an officer of state into wedlock, without the observance of the due forms, and to the great prejudice of the public morals. She humbly deems that the sacred cause of morality† is the most important

* Literally, 'dare to beg your lightening glance.'

† Mingkeaou, 'the famous doctrine' of Confucius—his system of morals.

important part of the imperial government, and that, of all the human relations, marriage gives rise to the first in order. Therefore in arranging every union, the intervention of negociators is indispensable, and previous to the assent of the parties themselves, the authority of the parents must be obtained. When all this has been done, the Six ceremonials must be observed, and the Three stars * shed their influence on the dwelling—the bride may then be carried to her new house. But a case like the present is unheard-of! The father of the male party at court, and not even represented by a delegate—the father of the female in exile, and no word of consent given—the commissioner enters the province, and before he attends to any business, issues two furious mandates in succession, compelling the petitioner to submit to an irregular marriage, merely to seek favour with his patron, and recompense private benefits! This is the conduct of Foongling!—The petitioner, a helpless female, could ill oppose him, and has no means of preserving her honour, except by destroying herself publicly

* Marriages in China have always been celebrated in the evening; hence the allusion in one of the odes of the ancient classic Sheeking: 'The three stars shine on the gate;' that is, the three stars of the Chinese constellation, corresponding to a part of Scorpio and Antares, (which, however, cannot always appear in the evening), are risen in the east. The two following lines are used on bridal occasions, exhibited at the doors of the house:

San sing tsae hoo; 'The three stars of evening shine on the gate.'
Pih leang ying mun, 'A hundred cars throng the portal.'

licly before his tribunal. But lest her unavenged injuries should hereafter rise up in the shape of calamities to trouble your majesty's reign,* she despatches her domestic emissary, at all hazards, to strike on the drum at the palace gate, and intreats the imperial benevolence to pity her hard case, and punish the commissioner as he justly deserves. Then, although the petitioner will have ceased to exist, she may perchance prove the means of life and safety to others in a similar situation. This memorial is offered up with profound awe."

When the commissioner had seen the beginning of the petition, in which he was accused of "seeking favour with his patron," his fears threw him into a cold sweat;—as he read on attentively, he fell a trembling,—and when he had finished the agitated perusal, his terror was ready to convert itself into rage, which would have vented itself on the victim before him; but seeing her hold the knife in her grasp, and the determination with which she purposed to destroy herself, he bethought him of the consequences—and wavered. He then

* This is rather a curious passage, and has been rendered as literally as possible. The Chinese say, "When the Emperor abandons virtue, heaven gives him warning by prodigies, as eclipses of the sun and moon, &c. Should he disregard these, prodigies still more striking and serious are the consequence, as droughts, famines, wars, the rushing down of mountain tops, and such like. Confucius himself declared, 'When a government is to be prosperous, there will be prognostics of felicity; when a government is to be overturned, there will be prognostics of evil.' In this manner the fall of the Mongol Tartar dynasty is said to have been predicted." I translate the note of my native scribe on the passage in the context.

then gave up his evil purpose, and quieted her with kind words. "I have been deceived," said he, "on my first arrival, by Kwoketsu, who declared that every preliminary had been settled for your union; it was for this reason I exerted my authority: my motive was good, and I knew not that so much had been wanting. I request, young lady, that you will retire in peace to your home. I will issue an order that you shall not be molested by any ill-intentioned persons. But the petition which you have sent must be recovered;—and this had better be done with all secrecy."

"Your lordship is very indulgent," replied Shueypingsin; "and I can ask for nothing more—but, alas! my servant has already been despatched three days!"

"Three months should make no difference!" exclaimed he, and a trusty domestic was instantly sent, with a description of the young lady's messenger, and a strict charge to go day and night in pursuit of him. Shueypingsin, when she had returned her acknowledgments, left the hall, and stepped into a small sedan, in which she was carried home so quietly, that not only Kwoketsu and her uncle, but the Chehëen himself, remained ignorant of what had passed.

Kwoketsu, in the height of his elation, had selected a fortunate day for the nuptials, and informed Shueyun: who went over to his niece, and congratulated her, saying that the bridegroom had fixed the period for espousing her at her own house.

She

She smiled on hearing this. "Uncle," said the young lady, "pray tell me if it is to be in this life, or in the life to come?"*

"Do not laugh at me," cried he, "you have done that enough already—but as regards the commissioner, the delegate of his majesty, and the awarder of life and death, I suspect *he* is not to be laughed at."

To this she replied, "Sir, you are my uncle and my father's representative; I should hardly think of offering such a slight—but if the commissioner of to-day should prove to be a very different personage from the commissioner of yesterday, I think I may be allowed to laugh at him."

"How happened it," asked Shueyun, "that when his two orders came down, you received them so quietly?—you should have taken *that* opportunity to laugh at him."

"And who knows," said his niece, "but such was my intention in receiving them?" She had scarcely uttered this, when a servant came to announce, that some official person from the commissioner was waiting outside, with a written notice, which he wished to deliver to the young lady. Shueypingsin purposely assumed an air of grave thought, as she exclaimed, "What notice can this be?"

"Oh

* An expression of the Budhists, or Metempsychosists. She alludes to his faith in their doctrines; which, in regard to hell and purgatory (*teyŏ* and *yewming*), are exactly described in the sixth Book of Virgil, line 738.

" Oh nothing," said her uncle; " it is merely to hasten you in your preparations; but wait while I go and inquire—if it is nothing more you need not come out."

" Very good," replied the young lady; and her uncle went out to receive the emissary, demanding the business of his visit. " No doubt it is to urge the completion of the marriage?" said he.

" By no means," replied the messenger: " his lordship commands me to say, that the first press of business left him no time to learn the truth of the lady's case, and he only yesterday ascertained that her father being exiled, she was left alone and unprotected at home, without being affianced to any one; —lest, therefore, unprincipled persons should attempt to molest her, his lordship especially sends this prohibitory order."

So saying he took the paper from an attendant, and gave it to Shueyun. The latter, astounded by what he heard, exclaimed to himself, " What is all this?" He uttered not a word, however, but asking the officer to be seated, carried the paper to his niece. " The commissioner sends this," said he, " I do not understand why—pray read it out that I may hear."

His niece opened the paper, and read it out distinctly as follows: " Notice from the Commissioner. It appears that Shueykeuyih, member of the military board, being exiled on the frontier, his only daughter lives

lives unaffianced in solitude at home. Her peculiar situation requires that I call upon the two local magistrates to take her under their careful protection. Should any violent and unprincipled persons offer to molest the young lady, the authorities of the district and those pertaining to her household are commanded to report it instantly, that I may apprehend and punish the offenders severely."

"Why, this is some charm to frighten away sprites!" said Shueypingsin laughing; "it is of little use to me! However, as he sends it, I must take it in proof of good will at least—it shall not be rejected." So saying, she gave her uncle a paper containing two taels of silver for the principal messenger, and another, holding a tenth of the same sum, for his follower, requesting that he would dismiss them.

Shueyun spoke not a word, so stupified was he by his astonishment, but carried the two enclosures to the people and sent them away: then going back to Shueypingsin, "My good niece," exclaimed he, "you were quite right—this commissioner is *not* the commissioner of yesterday; but, after the peremptory order to hasten the marriage, how comes this sudden notice to forbid the same?—It is quite beyond my comprehension."

"There is nothing difficult in the matter," replied she. "When he first arrived here, he fancied I was a poor defenceless girl whom he might easily oppress, and

and accordingly gave orders for the marriage, in compliment to Kwoketsu. Having discovered, however, that your niece is not to be trifled with, he begins to tremble for his office—hence his change of conduct, and this compliment to myself."

"But my brother is absent," said her uncle; "what means can *you* have of injuring his lordship, that he should be afraid of you?"

"Do not ask me now, uncle," replied she, laughing;—"wait a couple of days, and the thing will explain itself."

Full of doubts and perplexities, Shueyun took his departure, and quietly informed Kwoketsu of the notice which had been issued by the commissioner. The young man would not believe him. "It is impossible!" exclaimed he.

"I am not deceiving you," said the other; "but make haste—go and try to find out the reason yourself."

Finding that he was in earnest, Kwoketsu was seized with consternation; he ordered a chair, and hurried away to call upon the commissioner. No press of business had hitherto prevented the latter from admitting his friend; but to-day, although at leisure in a back-room, the answer was given that he was busy, and could see nobody. Kwoketsu was obliged to return home. The next day he went again, and so on for three or four days; but the answer still

was, that he could not be seen. Vexed and enraged at such treatment, the young man exclaimed, "What is the meaning of this change! But if he behaves to me with such contempt, I must send a letter to Peking,—we will then see how long he retains his office!"

But to observe the disgrace of the worthless Kwoketsu, and the merits of the chaste Shueypingsin, it is necessary to proceed to another chapter.

END OF VOL. I.

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ERRATA.

Vol. I. page 20, for *sime*, read *time*.
— 26, — *Changkněen*, r. *Changkěen*.
— 49, — *Seaoutau*, r. *Seaoutan*.
— 56, — *parents'*, r. *parent's*.
— 100, — *gallopped*, r. *galloped*.
— 135, — *became*, r. *become*.
— 147, — *giving*, r. *given*.
— 162, — *lodgings*, r. *lodging*.
— 236, — *can. But*, r. *can but*.

THE

FORTUNATE UNION,

A CHINESE ROMANCE.

J. Netherclift's Litheg. for the Oriental Translation Fund.

THE

FORTUNATE UNION,

A ROMANCE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE ORIGINAL,

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A CHINESE TRAGEDY.

By JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, F.R.S.
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, AND OF THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEE, &c.

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THE

FORTUNATE UNION.

CHAPTER XI.

"TEIHCHUNGYU, URGED BY HIS ATTACHMENT, GOES A HUNDRED LEAGUES TO THE LADY'S SUCCOUR."

Deny not that her peril was a case
To claim his aid—each thought and energy
Was bent to serve her; and his course he hasten'd,
To prove himself no ingrate. 'Twas not passion
Alone that urg'd him—justice loudly call'd
For interference—no officious zeal
Was his, for if not he, who else had mov'd?

We have seen the vexation of Kwoketsu, when he found that the commissioner, instead of hastening his marriage, had issued a prohibitory notice in favour of Shueypingsin;—as well as his rage at being constantly denied in his calls at the great man's house. Still he was at a loss how to proceed, and accordingly paid a visit to the Chehëen, to see what he could learn from him. That magistrate was startled when he heard of the change in the commissioner's conduct, and exclaimed, "What can be the meaning of this!—No doubt," continued he, after a little consideration, "it must be

Shueypingsin herself who has exerted her supernatural powers, and discomfited his lordship."

"But by what device," inquired the other, "could a young girl, whose father is exiled, and who has never been out of the female apartments, produce such an effect?"

"You must not confound her with ordinary characters," said the magistrate: "young girl as she is, she possesses the sense and ingenuity of the most extraordinary persons in history. When I went to her the other day with the commissioner's order, she made no objection whatever, but was all compliance; and I even *then* could not help suspecting she had some scheme in view. At my subsequent visit, when I advised her not to practice any evasions, she replied, 'There is no chance of it on my part; but I fancy his lordship may find it necessary to alter his conduct.' Now since he really has done what she predicted, it must doubtless be in consequence of her own contrivance. Let me advise you, my young friend, to make inquiries at his lordship's office; there must certainly be a reason for it."

Kwoketsu took his leave of the magistrate, and proceeded straight to the commissioner's. Now it might be imagined, that as Shueypingsin had appeared openly before the tribunal, the attendants of the court must be acquainted with what had passed, and would readily inform him—but his lordship was so afraid of the matter becoming

becoming notorious, that he had charged his people to keep it secret, and the young man therefore could pick up nothing from them.

He had thus passed more than twenty days in a very unpleasant state of mind, when a messenger arrived from the commissioner to invite his attendance; upon which he imagined it could be for no other than a favourable purpose, and accordingly hastened to the audience. To his surprise, the commissioner, after politely leading him to an inner apartment, opened the conversation thus: "My friend, it was solely on *your* account, that my ignorance of the real state of affairs had nearly involved me in the deepest calamity."

"The authority of your high office," replied Kwoketsu, "exerted as it was to effect the marriage of a young girl, subject to your control, though it may have been productive of some trouble, could hardly be attended with such consequences as you mention. Why should your lordship break faith with me?"

The other replied, "It was just this feeling of contempt for a young girl under my authority which led me to issue the order, expecting that she must of course bow her head and submit—but this Shueypingsin turns out to be a very formidable personage, one that is gifted with extraordinary resources. When my order arrived, she was all compliance, without the least change of colour or countenance; but in the meanwhile, she quietly prepared an address to the emperor, and with

the utmost secrecy despatched a trusty domestic to Peking, with directions to strike the drum at the palace gate, and present the accusation against me. Tell me, now, have I not reason to be afraid of her?"

Astonished by what he heard, the young man exclaimed, "Surely she never could be so rash! I still suspect it is a falsehood, invented to gain her object. But whence did your lordship learn this?"

"The attempt to procure my degradation was not the whole of her daring," said the commissioner; —"she brought a copy of the petition and shewed it to me herself."

"But you should have torn up her petition," replied the other, "and dealt with her in such a summary manner as to break her spirit."

"The wonder is, that she had despatched the original address three days before," said his lordship;—"had I followed my first impulse, and dealt harshly with her, the petition being already despatched, what should I have said when an order came from his majesty, admitting the petition, and demanding the several parties?—This, however, was not all: she drew out a poniard, with which she would have stabbed herself, and involved me in deeper guilt by her own destruction."

"But allowing that her address had been received," replied Kwoketsu, "there is no reason why your

your lordship should not have met it by a counter-address."

"My good friend," answered the commissioner, "you have not seen what she wrote! It would have ruined me at once, and left no room for farther explanations. Had this paper been received, my own punishment were certain, and both yourself and your father would have been involved in trouble. I had no choice, but was obliged to pacify her by the prohibitory notice which I issued, and in return for which she furnished me with the name and description of her domestic, enabling me to send in pursuit of him. My reason for denying you, when you favoured me with calls for several successive days, was the fear lest this petition might not be recovered, in which case malicious persons would find occasion for remarks. The paper, however, being happily brought back, I have requested you to attend for the purpose of inspecting it, and being convinced that I have not broken my faith with you, but been compelled to these measures by necessity."

So saying he drew out the paper, and handed it to the young man.

Kwotketsu, though he could not understand the whole, was just able to distinguish the words 'seeking favour with his patron,' and felt a cold shiver run over him as he exclaimed, "What wonderful resolution does this young girl possess! She richly deserves my

my hatred. But shall I so easily give up the pursuit? My resentment at her obstinacy is only equalled by my determination to persecute her yet. I still hope that your lordship, out of consideration for my father, will continue to assist me towards the conclusion of this match."

"On any other subject whatever," replied the commissioner, "I would gladly receive your instructions, but with regard to this marriage your request is a little unreasonable. Let me advise you to cool on this subject:—if you prosecute it with violence you will be involved in trouble, for I can see that this young woman's conduct is not to be calculated on—she may not be safely provoked."

Perceiving that he gave up the cause altogether, Kwoketsu took leave of his lordship; but unable still to make up his mind to the disappointment, he sought advice from his friend Chingkee. Having informed him of what had passed, "Tell me," asked he, "does she not deserve all my resentment, with her accusation of 'seeking favour with his patron,'—a charge that goes so far to implicate my father himself?"

"You have a right to be incensed at her petition," replied his friend, "but if we weigh fairly her motives for avoiding this marriage, it is not so much from any objection to your mind or person, as from the want of the father's consent on either hand—nor, according to the

the established rites of wedlock, is she without reason on her side. My opinion is, that nothing must be rashly attempted in this case—but if you are determined to accomplish your purpose, seize the opportunity of Shueykeuyih's exile, and the high situation and prospects of your own father, to send a person, in the first place, to Peking, and acquainting your father with the circumstances, prevail on him to despatch a message from himself to the frontier. Think you that Shueykeuyih, in the midst of his disgrace, will do otherwise than consent?—and if the father's consent be obtained, we need have no fear of the daughter escaping us.

"You are right!" exclaimed the young man with delight,—"this is the straight road, and the only one to be taken. But all the circumstances cannot be stated in a letter, and I dare charge none of my domestics with such a mission. Let me beg you to proceed in person to my father; the sight of you will incline him favourably, and produce an excellent result."

"In a matter which so nearly concerns your satisfaction," replied his friend; "I could never think of refusing the trust you are willing to confide in me; I will most readily go as you desire."

"Then," said Kwoketsu joyfully, "with your assistance I consider my hopes as already accomplished!" An urgent epistle to his father was prepared with all haste, and every thing requisite being made ready for the

the journey, he despatched one of his old domestics in company with Chingkee to the capital.

All vainly do the winged insects ply
Their active toil—now on the topmost boughs
They search for flowers—now glancing quick descend!
All vainly—for the spring its blooming gifts
Denies them; and the gaudy butterfly
Frets idly—idly frets the busy bee.

Leaving them to pursue their journey, we turn to Teihchungyu, who on his return from Shantong to his native city, lived entirely at home, and cherished the remembrance of Shueypingsin's kindness. His liking for an adventurous life gradually wore away, and he turned his mind towards the acquisition of literary honours. Observing one day by chance in the gazette, that his father had petitioned to retire from office on account of sickness, he became alarmed, and in order to satisfy himself as to the real cause of this unexpected step, took horse immediately for Peking, attended by Seaoutan.

On approaching the capital, he saw at some distance before him a person mounted on a mule. His horse being the faster animal of the two, soon passed the other, and Teihchungyu on turning round, perceived that the stranger was no other than Shueypingsin's trusty domestic. "I think I know you," said he: "what has brought you so far?"

The man raised his head on being accosted, and at once recognizing the youth, leaped down from his mule, and

and cried out, " Sir, you are the very person I wished to see."

" What !" said Teihchungyu with surprise, " on what errand do you come to me ?" And with that he reined in his horse, and eagerly dismounted to make farther inquiry.—" Is it on account of your master's business, or your young lady's, that you were despatched hither ?"

" My young lady's," replied the man, and Teihchungyu, with a mixture of surprise and alarm, desired to be informed of it.

" Surely," said he, " it must be some fresh villainy of Kwoketsu ?"

" You are quite right, sir," answered the domestic; " but this last act greatly outdoes all the past, and my young lady, driven to extremity, has sent me to Peking to strike on the drum at the palace-gate and present her petition ; though, apprehending my unfitness for such a charge, she desired me first of all to wait upon you and obtain your assistance."

" There will be no difficulty in presenting the petition," said Teihchungyu ; " but tell me, what wickedness has Kwoketsu practised to drive your lady to such a measure ?"

" All his former contrivances," replied the man, " were his own, and he could devise nothing but what was easily circumvented by my lady's prudence ; but the newly arrived commissioner is unfortunately a pupil

of

of the minister, and ready to undertake any thing for his sake. He issued several mandates, requiring the Chehëen to see that the marriage was concluded within a month. There was no opposing this, and accordingly my lady wrote an accusation against him, and commanded me to bring it, in search of your advice and assistance. Being so fortunate as to meet you here, I have only to request you will put me in the way of presenting it: every thing requisite is prepared.

The resentment of Teihchungyu was excited. "What commissioner has dared," exclaimed he, "to act in this mad style?"—The man told him his name.—"So!" said the youth, "it is that fellow Foongling! I shall be delighted to send up your lady's petition, and become instrumental to his degradation: 'tis but a small matter, and you need not strike the drum: I will present it at the proper office, and engage them to send it up at the regular period. When a reply has been received, it will be time to move the tribunal of rites to propose his dismissal: we will then see how long he remains in power!"

"Through your exertions, sir," replied the man, "my lady's cause cannot but succeed."

Teihchungyu now mounted his horse, observing, "It is not fit to discuss the matter on this public road. I will ride on, as my horse is fleet; do you follow me as quickly as you can to the private office of the inspector general; I will desire Seaoutan to wait for you at the gate."

The

The man promised to obey, and Teihchungyu giving his horse the whip, galloped off at speed. He was not long in reaching his destination, where he found that his father's application for leave had not been admitted by the emperor; but the doors were as usual crowded with business. He went in straight to wait on his father and mother, and ascertained that his majesty had some weighty matters for the consideration of the inspector's office, and the application on his father's part was nothing more than a mere form which custom required.

His mind once at rest on this head, Seaoutan was desired to attend at the outer gate: but the evening arrived, and Shueypingsin's messenger did not appear. Our hero began to be anxious. "How is it," thought he, "that this man does not make more haste with his lady's despatch?—Perhaps his mule has detained him, and he may have put up somewhere for the night; no doubt I shall see him to-morrow."

The next morning, however, Seaoutan waited at the gate in vain. The afternoon arrived, and no messenger appeared. Teihchungyu now began to suspect that the man had met with somebody else, as well able to assist him. His only course, therefore, was to send a proper person to the office for presenting memorials, to inquire if an address had been delivered from the daughter of Shueykeuyih; but the messenger returned with an answer in the negative.

He would not give up the inquiry yet, but despatched a man

a man to the southern gate of the imperial palace, to find out if any person had struck on the drum: this person, however, returned without news.

Teihchungyu now began to suspect the worst. "The man distinctly said," thought he to himself, "that my assistance had been contemplated in presenting the memorial: why does he not appear? Doubtless he must have divulged his secret, and some spy or confidential friend of the commissioner has put him out of the way!—or it is just possible that he has been seized with a sudden and fatal malady." An endless number of conjectures thus passed through his mind; but the truth never once occurred to him—namely, that Shueypingsin's domestic had, on reaching the city-gate, been overtaken and conveyed back by the messenger sent in pursuit of him.

He continued his inquiries for several days in every direction; but without discovering a trace or shadow of his object, and began then to be seriously alarmed. "Had Shueypingsin's memorial only been presented," thought he, "the commissioner were no longer formidable: but he is still in full power, and she, an unprotected female, can with all her prudence and ability do little to oppose him. Her father in exile, and the whole district in which she lives devoted to Kwoketsu, who is there but myself to assist her? According to the old maxim, 'A good man will die for his friend;' but Shueypingsin has been more than a common friend to me. Were I ignorant of her present danger, I might have

have an excuse; but with the full knowledge of it, to refrain from giving her my succour, were to prove myself, one of the bearded sex, inferior in courage and generosity to a tender female! This would indeed be a breach of the ancient rule."

His mind once made up, he took leave of his father and mother, under plea of returning home to his studies; and in order to excite the less notice, rode a mule in lieu of a horse, journeying night and day towards Shantong province, attended solely by his page. While thus intent on succouring his benefactress, he deliberated within himself. "Considering the vile act of this thief of a commissioner, it would delight me much to break into his hall of audience, and disgrace him publicly. Let me remember, however, that he is the delegate of the emperor, and after such treatment as this, might present a memorial, accusing me of offering indignity to an imperial commissioner, which would be a plausible charge;—though did we both* appear for judgment before his majesty, and argue our cause together, there is so much more reason on my side that I should not be afraid of him. But then I have before me the example of Shueypingsin herself; who, without betraying the slightest emotion, has discomfited the most powerful enemies. Did I make a disturbance on this occasion, she would despise me as a hot-headed fellow. Let me proceed at once

* It is not very clear that causes are thus verbally pleaded before the emperor at the present day; but the above is a faithful version of the original.

once to the house of Shueypingsin, and providing myself there with the commissioner's two orders, carry them back to Peking, and engage my father to accuse him formally before the emperor:—we will then see what he has to say in his defence!"

> Though small the heart that in another's cause
> Grows warm, it is a world of busy thought:
> —Denied repose, its energies it wastes
> In endless musings.

His resolution thus formed, Teihchungyu hastened on without a moment's delay, and arrived in a few days at his destination, where he first sought a lodging, and leaving his travelling effects in charge of his boy, walked all alone towards the mansion of Shueypingsin.

On approaching the gate-way, every thing appeared quiet; not an individual could be seen. He walked in at the principal gate, where all was silent, and then entered the inner gate,* where though he saw nobody moving, he observed, fixed against the wall by the door-side, an authoritative notice, which, on approaching nearer, he perceived to be issued in the commissioner's name. "Why," thought he to himself, "what should make this fellow, after he had already limited a time for the marriage, fix up an additional notice to the same purpose? But I must take this with me as evidence." When he read on, however, he discovered that, far from hastening the marriage, it was a prohibitory notice, forbidding

* Chinese houses of consequence have a court before them, and the second gate forms the entrance of the mansion.

bidding all persons to attempt gaining possession of the young lady by violence!

As he finished the perusal, it was with a mixture of surprise and satisfaction that he exclaimed to himself, "This is indeed most unaccountable! Did not her messenger tell me that the commissioner had urged her marriage by two successive mandates, and that this was the occasion of her memorial to the emperor?—What means this notice of a tendency so opposite? Doubtless Shueypingsin must have bribed the commissioner to change his mind;* or perhaps her father has been recalled to office, and he dared not provoke one in power by his rashness."

Unable to explain it, he would have entered the house, and ascertained the truth: but checked himself with this reflection. "She is a solitary female, and I can plead neither relationship, nor any other pretence for going in. Were she in actual danger from her suitors, there would be less objection to such a step; but with this quiet and satisfactory notice at her doors, my entrance would subject me to the imputation of seeking my own views, under a show of disinterestedness. This will never do! But let me go and inquire elsewhere; who knows but somebody can give me the information I want."

As he issued from the outer gateway, he came all at once upon the uncle Shueyun, who chanced to be passing

* Orig. "to change his face."

passing that way. Being mutually acquainted, they could do no otherwise than approach with the customary salutations. Thought Shueyun to himself: "It is not long since he took his departure in a great passion; then what brings him here to-day?—why surely he must be possessed.*—Pray, sir," said he, addressing the yóuth, when did you arrive. May I ask if you have seen my niece yet?"

"It was only to-day," replied Teihchungyu, "that I reached this place; and I have not been so presumptuous as to disturb the young lady your niece."

"Then," asked the other, "if not to see my niece, for what purpose might you come?"

"I heard at Peking," said the youth, "that his lordship the commissioner had made such a bad use of his power, as to issue two separate mandates, limiting a month for your niece's compulsory marriage. I considered that the regulation of a young lady's marriage concerned none but her parents, and that the commissioner had no right to commit such an act of oppression in search of his own private views. This was my reason for repairing hither in spite of the distance,—that I might succour your niece in her difficulties. I perceived, however, on entering the gate, that his lordship had fixed up a notice, prohibiting all persons from molesting the young lady; and this being quite in consonance

* *Chŏ leaou moo* precisely means 'possessed by a devil, or evil spirit.'

nance with the duty of a good magistrate, I concluded that the report at Peking must be false, and accordingly took my departure."

"Then, sir," exclaimed Shueyun, with a rude laugh, "the occasion of both your coming and going may be said to be equally slight! No doubt, however, the noblest motives govern your conduct; though there is some share of lightness in your mode of proceeding. But we will let that pass—and since you come from such a distance, you really should stop a little, and let me inform my niece of your reasons for undertaking the journey, that she may feel duly grateful, and come out to thank you—thus your trouble will not have been wholly in vain."

"Sir," replied Teihchungyu, "my motives for coming hither were not more on account of others, than to satisfy my own mind—that being done, where is the need of either gratitude or thanks?" Then with a very slight inclination, "Old gentleman," said he, "farewell!" and walked away with a haughty air.

The other would gladly have had another word with him, annoyed as he was by this unceremonious style. "What makes the young fellow so insolent?" thought he to himself; "let me see if I cannot find out a way of paying him off—it would delight me if I could!" After a little consideration, however, he felt quite at a loss as to the means, and resolved to go and consult with Kwoketsu. Desiring a young lad to follow Teihchungyu,

and find out his lodging, he proceeded straight to the house of his son-in-law, whom he acquainted with all the circumstances of the rencontre.

"What!" cried Kwoketsu, stamping with rage, "is this fellow come to snatch her from me? See here another cause of hate between us! But of a truth he shall not escape me: I will hazard my life, but I will be revenged!"

"How do you propose to do that?" inquired the other.

"I will go in search of him in the morning," replied he, "find out some pretext to pick a quarrel, and then report him to the commissioner: there is no fear, but his lordship will espouse my part."

Shueyun shook his head: "It will never do!—I understand this young man's father is president of the censorate, and, by his office, the commissioner's immediate superior—let his lordship therefore wish ever so much to assist you, he can do nothing to the prejudice of his superior's son."

Kwoketsu was startled. "Very true!" said he; "it never occurred to me: then what am I to do?"

"It strikes me," replied the other, "that we need not proceed to any great lengths* with him just now. Let us begin by playing him a trick, and getting him into a scrape: we will then give him a good sound beating, without

* Lit. 'move any great weapons.'

without his having much to complain of. This is about as much as he deserves from us."

"Well," said his son-in-law, "let us see if we can manage it—but, tell me, how are we to commence with him?"

"This Teihchungyu, with all his talking," said Shueyun, "is but a youngster after all: I am pretty certain that his true motive in journeying so far was some scheme of his own relating to my niece. When I came so unexpectedly upon him, he thought it necessary to make up that fine story, as a cover to his real designs. My suspicion is, that he is puzzled to find out some way of getting an interview with her: your plan, then, will be to meet him half-way by a contrivance of your own, and send a young boy, as if from my niece herself, to say that she had been aware of his arrival at her gate this morning, but was prevented from going out to meet him by the fear of notice: that she depends on having an interview with him this evening, about the setting of the first watch, at the gate of the back-garden, being anxious to communicate to him something of consequence. Now a god or a genius could never guess that this was false—wait, therefore, until he arrives, and let some stout fellows that you have previously laid in ambush, beat him black and blue.* Where can he go

* Orig. 'beat him till his head is blue, and his eyes swollen.'

to complain after this? Tell me, is it a good scheme or not?"

Kwoketsu was so pleased with it, that his whole face became one universal smile. "A most admirable plot!" cried he, "it cannot but succeed: and then when he has been well cudgelled, I will send him a letter, to let him know that the choice spirits of our part of the country are not to be rashly provoked." So saying, he sent for a clever smooth-tongued boy of his household, and making him perfect in a plausible story, told him exactly how he was to convey it to Teihchungyu. The lad was ready enough at his lesson, and had just learned it by heart, when the other boy, who had been sent by Shueyun in search of the place of lodging, luckily returned in time to be sent with him as a guide.

Teihchungyu, at a loss to account for the sudden change in the commissioner's conduct, and anxious to discover the reason, had gone straight to the Chehëen's to make inquiries; but that magistrate happened to be out on business, and the young man returned to his lodging. The guide, on perceiving his approach, pointed him out to his companion as the person he was to address, and the latter then went to meet Teihchungyu on his entrance, and following him into the lodging, addressed him in a low voice by his name: "Sir," said he, "where have you been? I have waited here some time for you."

Teihchungyu,

Teihchungyu, turning his head round and seeing a boy of fourteen or fifteen, inquired to whom he belonged, and what was his business? The boy would not answer at first; but looking about with an affectation of caution, went close up, and said in a whisper, "Sir, I am sent by my young lady, Shueypingsin."

"What!" exclaimed he, with a mixture of surprise and suspicion, "were there not the steward, and other fitter persons than yourself?—But let me hear, what is your errand?"

"My young lady might have sent others," replied the boy; "but she thought it more advisable to employ me, who am in her confidence, and can most fitly communicate what she has at heart."

"What may that be?" inquired Teihchungyu.

"She bids me say, sir, that when you were so good as to call this morning, she was aware of it, and would have come out to meet you—but it was impossible, in the first place, to speak unreservedly before people—next, to have been seen would have excited scandal—besides which, you had neither knocked at the door, nor entered the hall, and to detain you then would have appeared strange. So grateful, however, does she feel to you for coming thus far, that she must thank you in person, and accordingly sends me with this private message."

"Then go back and inform your lady," said Teihchungyu,

chungyu, " that I came hither to redress her wrongs; but it was chiefly to satisfy my own mind, and with no prospect of meeting her. Your lady is so good as to acknowledge my intentions; but there is no necessity for her to thank me in person, for there is a difference between the intercourse of ordinary friends and persons situated as we are."

" My lady is aware of that," replied the lad; " but she has met you before, and fears you might think her ungratefully proud did apprehension of scandal make her decline seeing you now. To avoid the remarks of idle people, however, she begs you to repair, at the setting of the first watch, to the back-garden gate. It may be done with all possible secrecy and convenience—pray then do not disappoint my lady."

Teihchungyu now broke into a violent rage. " Nonsense! — where does all this come from? Will you make me believe your lady has lost her wits?"

" She acts with the best intention, sir," said the boy; " why are you so angry?"

" How," thought he to himself, " should Shueypingsin, who has always conducted herself with such scrupulous delicacy, ever send such a message! Shall I believe that she has changed her very identity since we parted?—There is some trickery in this!" Then grasping the boy with one hand, while he threatened his face with the other: " You young villain," cried

he, " how have you the assurance to come here and attempt to defame with such vile imputations a young lady who is the pattern of the age! Think you I am not far removed above the reach of such tricks, that you dare to approach me with this loose story? But a youngster like you could never have invented it—somebody has sent you! Tell me then truly to whom you belong, and who charged you with this message, and I will spare you:—but be guilty of the least prevarication, and I will carry you to the magistrate, who shall flog you to death, you little villain!"

The boy, with all his ingenuity, finding himself in the rude grasp of Teihchungyu, and in instant danger of being beaten, grew half dead with terror, which was increased by the way in which his most hidden thoughts seemed to be divined. Still he would have persisted in saying that Shueypingsin sent him; but on receiving several hard blows about the face and ears, his resolution forsook him. He confessed that Kwoketsu was his master—that Shueyun had taught him the story—and that the young lady had nothing to do with it—entreating the youth at the same time to spare him.

Teihchungyu now laughed aloud, as he exclaimed: " Do such infernal imps pretend to play off their tricks in broad day!" Then letting the boy go, " I will spare you," said he, " as you have confessed the truth; but inform that old slave Shueyun from me, that

that Shueypingsin and I are beings far superior to himself, and that it is impossible for such a worthless fellow as he is to appreciate our conduct—I advise him not to seek his own sorrow. Now go about your business."

The boy was too well satisfied with his own escape to utter another word: so covering his face with his sleeve, he found his way home as fast as he could. The two friends were still sitting there, waiting for his answer; and when they saw him come back, hanging down his head and sobbing, they were terribly disconcerted. "What is the matter?" inquired Kwoketsu.

The boy was so full of his misfortune, that on seeing his master he burst into a violent fit of crying, "I have to thank that old gentleman for it all!" exclaimed he.

"Me!" said Shueyun, "what do you mean? I told you to go and personate my niece's servant, and convey a message which could not fail to delight him."

"You are quite wrong, sir," said the boy; "you consider that gentleman too lightly: his eyes look into your face with more skill than a fortune-teller's, and when he opens his lips to speak, it is just as if he saw and knew every thing." The lad then related, word for word, the meeting as it occurred.* "When I was

* The reader is spared a mere verbal repetition. These occasional redundancies are not peculiar to Chinese works.

'Edita ne brevibus pereat mihi charta libellis,
'Dicatur potius, τον δ'απαμειβόμενος.'

I was coming away," added he, turning to Shueyun, " he abused you, sir, and called you *an infernal imp*. He told me to advise you not to take the tiger by the beard, for you would only seek your own sorrow by it."

The two friends stared at each other, without being able to utter a word; but when they had remained stupified for some moments, Shueyun broke into a passion and exclaimed, " What a hateful young brute it is! —However, I am determined not to give him up yet."

" Give him up or not," observed Kwoketsu, " you can make nothing of him."

" Never mind," replied the other; " I have another scheme in store, which I think will make me even with him—and then I am satisfied."

But to learn what this scheme was, and to see the evil intended for another fall back upon himself, we must resort to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

"AVERSION IS AGGRAVATED, DURING AN ENTERTAINMENT, INTO HOSTILITY."

So might the witless cur acquaintance seek
With the fierce tiger—so might shrimps contend
With monstrous dragons!—Rout and dire disgrace
Await the knaves, scarce safe in base retreat;
And all too late they own just punishment
Their league presumptuous ends.

WHEN Shueyun said that he was in possession of another scheme for annoying Teihchungyu, his son-in-law desired eagerly to hear it. "I have not quite matured it yet," replied the other; "but considering that he comes from such a distance in behalf of my niece, he must certainly have a design upon her, and all this parade at the discovery of our stratagem is a mere pretence. However, I will contrive to make my niece send him a *real* invitation, and according as he behaves on the occasion, we will take our own measures."

Here Kwoketsu paused. "I doubt," said he, "how this might turn out. They have no means of communication at present, and we must beware how we provide them with any.—That would be a pretty scheme, indeed!"

"The scheme I intend," said the other, "is not to unite, but to keep them asunder. Do you be quiet, and let me

me manage it for the best." So saying, he took his departure, and repaired straight to Shueypingsin's mansion.

"My good niece!" exclaimed he, "you possess a singular share of penetration, and I really feel a great respect for your judgment."

"What do you mean, uncle?" inquired the young lady.

"Why, when every one else on a late occasion declared that Teihchungyu was a person of no principle, you alone positively maintained the contrary; and the event shewed that, far from being unprincipled, he is possessed of extraordinary virtue and resolution."

"But this is quite an old story," observed she, "why do you renew it?"

"I happened to fall in with him lately," said her uncle, "and had an opportunity of admiring his excellent qualities."

"Pray what occasion did he afford you of so doing?"

"I came suddenly upon him," replied he, "as I was passing your door this morning, issuing from your house. It occurred to me, that when I lately proposed his espousing you, he took affront at the mere suggestion, and departed in a rage; and I accordingly suspected that he could have returned with no good intention. I went up and addressed him, thinking to discover his designs, and expose them. But he proved himself once more to be a worthy character, and to have come here with a worthy motive."

"How

" How did you discover that his motive was a good one?" asked Shueypingsin.

" I inquired his reasons, and he informed me that he had heard at Peking of the commissioner's peremptory order, and knew it must be against your own consent. This gave him such uneasiness, that he despised the length of the journey in his hurry to arrive here, and oppose the commissioner. Ignorant of the particulars, he repaired first to your house, to ascertain them from yourself; but on entering the door, and perceiving the order against molesting you, so contrary to what he had previously learned, he concluded that he must have been misinformed, and departed satisfied without even knocking at the gate. Seeing him to be gifted with such virtue and resolution, how could I fail to admire him?"

" If such be the case," said his niece, " you may carry your recollection back to the day on which he rescued me at the magistrate's. You may then be sensible that such acts are customary with him—not the mere effusions of a moment; and that my gratitude and respect were not misplaced."

" Yes," replied Shueyun, " he rescued you on that occasion, and you, in return, saved his life when he fell sick. There was as much benefit conferred on one side as on the other, and no kindness thrown away. But he comes on this occasion to your succour, and finding that you are safe, retires cheerfully and in silence, without

without seeking your thanks. His deserts, therefore, at your hands far surpass his obligations to yourself; and were you either to remain ignorant through indifference, or, being once aware of it, fail duly to appreciate the same, it would be a breach of civility, viewed merely as a matter of form—but estimated by your own feelings, it must be a subject of inevitable regret. Your merits certainly bear no comparison with his at present."

"Uncle," said the young lady, "I value every word of your advice as gold and gems; but I am a solitary female, liable to calumny; and though I feel truly grateful for his services, yet am I compelled to assume this semblance of cold indifference, hoping that as my benefactor knows me well, he will do me justice on this occasion. How would it become me to enter into rivalry with him for the praise of a generous resolution?"

"It is very well to talk in that style," replied he, "but after journeying hither from several hundred miles distance, he will hardly like to lose his trouble altogether. Send him a message, then, inviting him to come and receive your thanks—he will be aware of your gratitude, and cease to wonder at you."

As Shueypingsin felt sensible that no occasion had yet occurred of acquainting the young gentleman with the circumstances attending her domestic's recall from Peking, her uncle's suggestion agreed very well with her own wishes. She knew that he had some scheme

in

in view, but was determined to meet him at his own weapons. "Uncle," said she, "your proposal is very reasonable, and I am ready to obey your commands; but the invitation must run in your name."

He readily assented to this, and she wrote an invitation to Teihchungyu, asking him to partake of some refreshment on the following day at noon. The old domestic was summoned to carry the ticket, and as he did not know our hero's lodging, the boy who had ascertained it was ordered to be his guide.

It happened fortunately that just as they arrived there, Teihchungyu was deliberating with himself whether he should stay where he was, or return home at once. Unacquainted with the motives which had induced the commissioner to issue his last notice, he was anxious to satisfy himself on that point, but still knew not where to inquire. His joy was great, therefore, on seeing the old domestic, whom he immediately addressed, and reminded of their late rencontre.

"The moment after I had seen you, sir," replied the man, "I was overtaken by an express from his excellency, and forced to return without any explanation. On the road, however, I made inquiries, and learned how my young lady presented to the commissioner, in court, a copy of her petition to the emperor: and how his lordship, alarmed at the fatal consequences to himself, prevailed on my young lady to let him issue his late notice, and at the same time give him a description

tion of her messenger, that I might be recalled by express. I little expected, sir, that your noble and disinterested friendship would allow you no rest until you had vanquished the difficulties of so long a journey; and my young lady is so grateful for your trouble, that she sends me to invite you to accept her thanks." So saying, he presented the ticket.

Teihchungyu was delighted by this explanation, and told the messenger, that his ignorance of the real motives of the commissioner had induced him to delay his departure. "Now that I have ascertained them from yourself," added he, "I shall commence my journey in the morning. I ought to pay my respects to your lady, in return for her former kindness; but the delicate situation in which we are placed is an obstacle. I am afraid lest my coming might excite discussion, and shall accordingly refrain. Take back this ticket, therefore, and tell your lady, that I am fully sensible of her kindness, but compelled by inevitable necessity to remain at a distance."

"But your well-known integrity, sir, and the established name of my lady," replied the man, "might allow you to accept this invitation, which after all comes only from my lady's uncle. No slander could attach to this, and your visit would be satisfactory to the feelings of all."

"My connexion with your lady," replied Teihchungyu, "is founded in a generous and disinterested friendship,

friendship, and not in empty ceremonies—what need have we of mere vulgar forms? Go therefore, and present my thanks, for I cannot come on any account."

This answer was too decisive to allow of the point being farther urged, and the steward returned straight home, where he informed his lady and her uncle of what had passed. Shueypingsin was rejoiced to find that our hero had declined the invitation. "This young man," exclaimed she, "has proved that whatever he does proceeds from a noble and sincere love of virtue; and the discretion with which he acts on this occasion, is entitled to my highest respect."

Shueyun could not overcome his vexation, but went as usual to consult with Kwoketsu. "This youngster," said he, "is possessed of extraordinary cunning; for whether we assail him with truth or falsehood, we can make nothing of him. He says he is going away—but I am sure he is not: he has some scheme in view yet, and I advise you to be on your guard.

"I look on him," exclaimed the other, "as a perfect devil! What is an honest man* like me to do with him? I would willingly maintain some figure in this neighbourhood; but he, well knowing that I wish to espouse your niece, perversely comes and forms an intrigue with her. Does not this make him my declared enemy? You contrived a snare for him, but he avoided it with ease—you tried to take him in, but he was too knowing for

* There seems some irony in this.

for you. What means have I, then, of guarding against him? My only resource is to call upon him to-morrow, and say that I have been attracted by his great fame to pay my respects. This will oblige him to return my visit. I will then prepare an entertainment, and invite three of my noble acquaintances to join in a drinking bout. We will ply him with wine till he is drunk, and then pick a quarrel about this very business. Some sturdy fellows shall be concealed near at hand, and we will set upon him at once, and belabour him till he is half dead. Then, when he carries his complaint before the commissioner, let his lordship be ever so willing to favour him, as the son of his immediate superior, still he dare do nothing to *our* prejudice. However the affair may turn out, we shall at least force him to quit the neighbourhood; for he never can look us in the face after it. —Is not this a delightful plan?"

Shueyun was extravagantly pleased. "A delightful plan, indeed!" exclaimed he;—"if you can only execute it."

"And why not?" said the young man; "his father is a member of the censorate, but mine is on the point of being minister of state; there is some slight difference between us."

"Then if your mind is made up," observed the other, "you had better call immediately, for fear he should slip away early to-morrow."

Kwoketsu accordingly desired one of his people to

prepare a large red ceremonial ticket, in which he courteously styled himself 'younger brother,' and then seating himself in his sedan, proceeded with a huge retinue to the lodging of Teihchungyu. When the latter saw the ticket, and knew who his visitor was, he felt such a repugnance to the meeting, that he made his escape in a great hurry, and told Seaoutan to say that he was not at home. Kwoketsu notwithstanding stepped out of his chair, and walking in at the door delivered a great many complimentary messages to the attendant; after which he re-entered his sedan, and took his departure.

Teihchungyu now began to deliberate with himself. "What is the reason of his coming to visit me, his declared enemy? No doubt it is the repeated failure of his plots that makes him try once more if he can injure me. You want to play me a trick!" thought he laughing to himself; "but I fear you will hardly succeed. My business here is finished: I will return to-morrow; it is no time for me to be idling with him—nor is there any occasion to return the visit." After a little consideration, however, he added: "This is a worthless fellow to be sure; but still the son of a minister. Did I omit noticing a visit made with such ceremony, it might be thought I gave myself uncivil airs. Considering his dissipated habits, he no doubt rises late. I will send in a ticket very early in the morning, and proceed at once on my journey. The call at least will have been returned, and he can have nothing

nothing to say. In this manner I shall completely satisfy the demands, both of civility towards him, and of prudence as regards myself."

With this resolution he rose next morning before the sun, and desiring his boy to prepare all things in readiness for starting, proceeded, attended by a lad who was attached to the lodging, to exchange Kwoketsu's ticket of ceremony. The latter, however, had placed a person in waiting, who, the moment he perceived Teihchungyu on the move, flew to give information, and Kwoketsu, by the time his visitor had reached the gate, was ready dressed to receive him. He came out all smiles. "My unsuccessful visit of yesterday was only a slight token of respect; I did not presume to expect you would return it." Then with much ceremony he ushered his guest into the mansion.

Teihchungyu never intended to go beyond the exchange of tickets; but being received with such a semblance of cordiality, he was obliged, though without relaxing his reserve, to present his ticket, and accompany Kwoketsu as far as the outer hall. There he would have gone through the customary ceremonies; but his host stopped him. "This is not a fit place!" said he, and forthwith ushered the youth into the inner hall, where they saluted each other in form, and having taken their seats, tea was served up. Kwoketsu began the conversation. "I have long heard of your fame, sir, and been very anxious to meet you. When you con-

descended to honour our poor district with a visit, I lost no time in trying to see you; but you were absent on business, and I have dwelt on the disappointment ever since. I rejoice in your present condescension: —may I venture to prepare a ten-days' entertainment, as some consolation for my late chagrin?"

Teihchungyu, however, when he had partaken of the tea, rose from his seat. "In return, sir, for your politeness, I ought to stay and receive your instruction; but my thoughts tend towards home like the arrow to its mark: I am compelled to depart this moment, though I may perhaps, on some other occasion, accept your hospitality."

With this he walked towards the door; but Kwoketsu stopped him. "To meet thus without drinking," cried he, "would make us the scoff of the moon and winds!—Admitting that you are in haste, I must still insist on your remaining three days."

"I am really compelled to depart," replied Teihchungyu;—"it is not a matter of choice. I must indeed beg you to excuse me!"

So saying, he again made towards the entrance; but the other laid hold of his arm.—"I am but an obscure individual, but yet of respectable parentage: you should not thus despise me altogether. If you really despise me, why favour me with this visit? —but having so favoured me, you must let me act the part of a host. My earnestness is the mere wish to discharge

discharge the obligations of hospitality. I can have no other views, and know not why you resist me with such pertinacity."

"In return for your kindness," answered Teihchungyu, "I can hardly bring myself to say that I will go; but all things are prepared, and I am scarcely at liberty to chuse."

"If you are determined to go," said Kwoketsu, "I would not willingly urge your stay; but to see you come thus early, and go away again without breaking your fast, would make me very uneasy. I venture not to detain you long—only while I prepare a slight refreshment, after which you shall be at liberty to depart. Thus our friendly feelings will be mutually satisfied:—can you still refuse to remain?"

Teihchungyu, with all his unwillingness to stay, felt obliged to yield to the extreme earnestness of his host. "In a mere visit," observed he, "why should I give you so much trouble?"

"When friends meet," replied the other, "they forget all such considerations: these ceremonious expressions do not become a person of your frank temper."

While he was speaking, Shueyun suddenly arrived, and making Teihchungyu a low obeisance, addressed him with a face full of smiles: "Sir, my niece, in gratitude for your kindness, desired me to invite you to accept

accept a small mark of our devotion: your unexpected refusal we cannot explain—but fate has happily thrown me again in your way this morning."

"Circumstances," replied Teihchungyu, "forbade my accepting the invitation with which you honoured me. My intention this morning was merely to pay a transient visit: but this gentleman is so good as to urge my stay very pressingly. I was just wavering between the impropriety of remaining, and the incivility of going.—Your fortunate arrival will serve to decide me."

"Friends of old," exclaimed Shueyun, "improved every occasion of meeting. It is hard, sir, if you and my son-in-law are not as good as they—or should be more subservient than they were to mere forms; it would be a great mistake!"

Kwoketsu laughed aloud. "My good father-in-law speaks to the purpose!" cried he: and the youth, pressed so urgently to remain, was inclined to forget what had passed, and take their civility in good part. Wine was presently served up, and the host invited him to take the principal seat.

Teihchungyu demurred. "You take compassion on my morning fast, and bestow a breakfast on me; but why introduce the wine? I apprehend it is hardly the time of day to drink."

The other, however, ridiculed the idea. "Let us only

only take our wine quietly, and the proper time will be sure to arrive!"—They all joined in a laugh at this joke, and seated themselves.

Now it so happened that the whole party were on very fair terms with the bottle,* and they had no sooner raised their hands to their mouths, than they felt a sufficient taste for what they were about. All three pledged each other without flinching, and when they had drank for some time, Teihchungyu began to think it was time to stop;—but those on the left and right suddenly announced, that the third son of Wong, member of the military tribunal, had arrived.

The party of course stopped to receive him, and Kwoketsu, when he had helped his new guest to a seat, observed, "Friend Wong, you come very opportunely. This gentleman (pointing to Teihchungyu), is a celebrated character—you could hardly dispense with seeing him."

"Surely," replied the other, "it must be Teihchungyu, who signalized himself by breaking his way into Takwae's palace!"

"The very same, the very same," quickly exclaimed Shueyun, upon which the other, with many demonstrations of profound respect, filled up a great wine-cup, and presenting it to Teihchungyu, added, "I borrow my friend's wine thus slightly to evince my deep regard."

Our

* Literally, '*keopeikseng*'—a fermenting cake, used in making wine.

Our hero received it, and pouring out another cup in return, paid back the civility. "I am rude, and unworthy of your compliment," said he,—"your golden and gem-like merits alone deserve honour."

On the conclusion of their mutual civilities, three cups* had been drank by each, and Teihchungyu was going to declare he would take no more—when the attendants announced that the second son of Le, member of the imperial college, was at the door. The party would have risen to receive him, but he came up to the table and prevented them, exclaiming, "Friends like us must not be ceremonious,—I will take my seat here!"

"But we have a new guest from a distance among us," observed the host; upon which Teihchungyu rose to pay his respects; but the other, without so much as bowing, stared at him as he exclaimed,—"A goodly personage! I beg to inquire you name, sir?"

Teihchungyu informed him.—"Oh!" said the visitor, "the eldest son of the censor of that name!" and after a profusion of bows, he expressed his satisfaction at a meeting he had long wished for. Kwoketsu now helped the new guest to a seat;—but Teihchungyu, already affected by the wine he had drank, and anxious to depart, declined participating farther in their festivities.

"Perhaps,"

* That the reader may not be surprised at the apparent intemperance of a Chinese symposium, he must be reminded that their cups are extremely small, and their wine very weak indeed.

"Perhaps," said he, "I ought not to take my leave on this gentleman's first arrival: but I came here so early, have exceeded my quantity so much, and am so hurried in my journey, that I must beg to be allowed to go away."

The new guest affected to be much hurt. "You are rude, sir!" exclaimed he; "if you wished to go, you might have gone before:—cannot you stop a moment after my arrival? You mean, perhaps, that I am not good enough to drink with you!"

Shueyun now affected to interpose. "This gentleman has long proposed going,—it is not for the reason you apprehend. Still it would be rude to decline taking wine with a newly arrived guest. Three cups have already been taken with the last visitor; let three, then, be taken with this—after which, permission to go or stay will rest with our host, and cannot concern us." His decision was much applauded by the others, and Teih-chungyu consented to sit down again, and take three cups with the guest last arrived.

—No sooner was this done, however, than the attendants announced the approach of another visitor, the eldest son of Chāng, a person of station. Before any reply could be given, the young man himself came swaggering in, his dress in disorder, his eyes askant, and full of a depraved expression, and the whole of his speckled visage bearing marks of intemperance. He had made himself drunk already, and as he entered, exclaimed,

exclaimed, "Where is this Teihchungyu, that comes to shew off his exploits in our part of the world—how is it I have not met him before?"

The youth had got up, prepared to salute him: but, thus uncivilly accosted, he stood erect and replied, "I am the person you require, sir—what are your commands?"

The other, without bowing, stared repeatedly at him in an insolent manner, and at length exclaimed with a loud laugh, "Why, I expected to see a very fierce looking fellow, with at least seven heads and as many hearts;* but these delicate features, and this fair face, might better befit some young lady! 'Tis a mere effeminate!—but let that rest; it is time that we try him with a little wine."

The rest of the party all agreed that this was the best possible method of proving him. Teihchungyu, however, temperately replied, "Wine is taken on account of friendship, for the sake of chearfulness, and as an occasional indulgence; every one has his own reasons for drinking. One sage confined himself to three cups; while another passed whole nights in drinking with disordered head-gear—and a hundred excellent occasions present themselves, without the necessity of what you propose."

"If

* Not to be absurd, it was necessary to translate by an equivalent in this place. The original, *Tăn*, means 'the gall,' in which the Chinese chuse to place the seat of courage. 'Great gall,' with them, has the meaning of 'great heart' in English.

"If there are a hundred excellent occasions," retorted the drunken visitor, "how do you know that this is not one of them?" So saying, he motioned to Teihchungyu to sit down with him, and desiring the attendants to fill up two large cups, presented one to the youth, and taking the other in his hands, said, "Friends drink together from their hearts—this is my first meeting with you, sir, and I should wish to be better acquainted with your disposition; let us try it with this cup of wine." He then drank off his own at once, and holding up the inverted cup to his antagonist, called on him to do the same. Teihchungyu, seeing him drink off the cup so heartily, was compelled perforce to do the same by his own, and exhibited his empty cup in return. The other expressed his satisfaction. "This is friendly!" cried he—and then called on the servants to fill up again.

Teihchungyu, however, would take no more: "I have sat too long," said he, "and drank too much already. Three cups a-piece I took with the two guests last arrived; and one, sir, with yourself:—my powers are limited, and I really cannot drink any more."

"But why take only a single cup with me," cried the other, "when you have taken three a-piece with the other two guests? You wish to offer me an insult; but I am determined to maintain my reputation, and will not put up with slights from any man—certainly not

not from you." So saying, he drank off the cup which he held in his hand, and again exhibited it empty to Teihchungyu.

The latter, who had come so early, and sat drinking so long without the accompaniment of a regular meal, was nearly overcome already: he therefore took the cup which was presented to him, but would not drink it;—and when the other began to urge him rudely, he placed down the cup and threw himself back in his chair, with an air of determination, shaking his head in token of refusal; but saying nothing.

The insolent visitor now flew into a violent rage. "It was agreed," cried he, "we should drink together; why do you not answer my pledge: have you a mind to bully me?"

Teihchungyu, giddy with what he had drank, sat back in his chair, and persisted in refusal. "If I could drink with you," said he, "I would:—but as I cannot, I will not. What is there to bully you in that?"

The other grew still more enraged, and roared out, "Do you dare to say you will not drink the wine?"

"And what if I will not?" said Teihchungyu.

His antagonist now lost all restraint. "You young brute," exclaimed he; "play off your exploits at home; but how dare you come here to assume such airs?—You shall drink the wine in spite of yourself!" So snatching up the cup, he threw the contents all over the other's head and face.

Teihchungyu

Teihchungyu had all his recollection about him, and this abuse and insult at once aroused the fire of his temper;—he was sobered in a moment, and jumping up, seized his antagonist, whom he shook with fury. "You daring villain! is it thus you tempt death in the tiger's jaws?" The other, finding himself so handled, asked if he presumed to strike him.—"And what if I do?" replied the youth, slapping him at the same time across the face.

The other two visitors, seeing their friend beaten, began to abuse Teihchungyu, and exclaimed against his treating one of the company in that manner. Kwoketsu, too, put in a word. "What return is this," cried he, "for my hospitality? How dare you give a loose to your drunkenness in this place?—But make haste—shut the doors, and prevent his escape: we will beat him till he is sober, and then carry him to the commissioner for his reward." With this he made a concerted signal, and there instantly appeared seven or eight stout fellows, who rushed out from the two side-rooms, and surrounded them in a body.

Here Shueyun affected to interpose, and counsel those present not to proceed to violence—his real intention being to secure the youth's hands. Teihchungyu was fully alive to his situation, and perceived plainly the snare into which they had inveigled him.—But he only laughed at them. "You pack of wretched dogs!" cried he, "do you presume to set upon me in this way?"

way?" so saying he seized and secured the beginner of the fray on the spot, and with one hand upset the table, tumbling all that stood upon it to the ground. Shueyun, who had come close up to him, now felt his strength. —"Nothing but my consideration for your niece prevents my treating you worse!" cried Teihchungyu, as he hurled him with one effort to several feet distance, where he lay on the ground, prostrate and unable to move.

The other two visitors, seeing his fierceness and strength, were content to remain at a distance, bawling out "Treason! treason!" while Kwoketsu stepped up, supported by his men:—but Teihchungyu at the same moment grasped his prisoner, as he had done Takwae on a former occasion, and sweeping him round, sent his assailants tumbling about in all directions. The young man whom he handled thus roughly was a luxurious rake, weak and worn out;—he lay prostrate on the spot where he was flung down, his head swimming, his eyes dancing, and all sick with the wine he had drank.—"Be quiet, friends!" cried he, "let us have a parley."

"I have nothing to parley about," said Teihchungyu, —"only shew me quietly to the door, and all shall be well: but if you attempt to detain me, I will be the death of every one of you."

The other eagerly assented.—"I will go with you—I will go with you!" exclaimed he: and Teihchungyu then placed

placed him upright on his legs, and grasping him with one hand, walked out towards the entrance. Those who looked on, enraged as they were, did not venture to interfere, but stood aloof and talked big. "What rash behaviour is this," cried they, "within the limits of the city?—but let him go; we will have him humbled presently!"

Teihchungyu paid no attention to them; but walked out beyond the principal gate with his prisoner in his grasp, and there set him at liberty. "I will trouble you, friend," said he, "to go back and inform your companions, that with a sword in my hand I would not allow an army to confine me; what folly, then, in three or four wretched debauchees, aided by a few filthy clowns, to think they could beard the tiger in his fury! Nothing but my regard for their respectable kindred prevents my handling them very roughly, and breaking some of their bones. In return for my sparing their lives, let them burn incense and prostrate themselves night and morning, as some recompense for such undeserved clemency;—be sure to tell them this from me." So saying, he raised his hands ceremoniously, and bidding the other adieu, walked deliberately towards his lodging.

On arriving there, he found Seaoutan all in readiness with his travelling furniture, accompanied by Shueypingsin's chief domestic, who was holding a horse, and waiting to see him. Ignorant of the reason of this, he questioned the man, who replied, "My young lady discovered,

discovered, sir, that Kwoketsu would detain you to-day to partake of an entertainment, and felt certain, all circumstances considered, that it must end in a quarrel. She was equally certain that you would discomfit and disgrace him, and that he, in consequence, would never let the affair drop until he had provoked a serious discussion. Fearful lest you might incautiously depart from this place, and leave them at liberty to present a false accusation, which hereafter it might be too late to repel, and having learned that the commissioner is holding a circuit court in the neighbouring city Tong-changfoo,* my lady advises that you proceed at once to seek a personal audience of his lordship, and represent the villainous conduct of Kwoketsu. Your statement once recorded, let them attempt as they will to dupe his lordship, it will be of no consequence. For this purpose, sir, I was ordered to prepare a horse and attend on you."

Teihchungyu was charmed by what he heard. "How can your lady interest herself so much on my account?" said he,—"I can make no adequate return for such kindness. How unerring is she in her calculations! how provident of the future! I can never sufficiently honour her; but her instructions shall be scrupulously obeyed." So saying, he entered the lodging, and when he had taken his mid-day meal, and bid adieu to his host, proceeded on horseback, with

* See Map.

with Seaoutan and the old domestic, towards Tong-changfoo.

> Abundant resolution arms the hero,
> And cautious wisdom is the maiden's guard:
> Each aids the other when occasion calls,
> And each kind deed lends strictness to the tie.

He found on his arrival that the commissioner was holding his court, and presently drew up a formal accusation, in which he charged the four young men and Shueyun with conspiring against him, and called on his lordship to issue his authority for their arrest and punishment. On reaching the gate, he did not wait for the usual forms of presenting the paper, but struck upon the drum: and the attendants, without any ceremony, hurried him before the tribunal. Teihchungyu, with a due respect to the representative of the emperor, went through the customary form of kneeling, and then handed up his address.

The commissioner thought he knew the stranger, and when he had glanced over the paper, and confirmed his surmise, he read no farther, but leaving his seat, and ordering the gates to be closed, desired his attendants to request Teihchungyu would walk up. The young man, on complying with the summons, would have repeated the customary respect; but his lordship prevented him, and desired that this should be considered as a private interview. When they had taken their seats, and tea had been served, the commissioner inquired when he had arrived, and the occasion of his coming.

"I visited this part of the country," replied Teih-chungyu, "with no intention of troubling your lordship; but fell in unexpectedly with a gang of scoundrels, who conspired to injure, and in fact went near to murder me. I have happily escaped from them; but nevertheless feel the injury they intended, and therefore present myself before your tribunal, to beg your lordship will do me justice."

"Who could have been so rash as to conspire against you?" inquired the commissioner:—"I will certainly execute the law against them in full rigour." So saying, he resumed his perusal of the address, and read it to the end: upon which he knit his brows, and after an interval of perplexed silence, expressed his regret at the names of the offenders.

"To weed out the profligate, and expel the base, is your lordship's particular vocation," said Teihchungyu; "and as you are secure in your high office, there is the less need of hesitation, or of indulgence to such persons as these."

"It is not that I wish to shew *them* any indulgence," replied the other; "but their fathers are persons of high station, and the punishment of the sons might bring such disgrace upon them as would be highly inconvenient.* Besides, these fellows are a mere parcel of

* Fathers are *frequently* punished for the faults of their children, as well as rewarded for their merits; and this responsibility is supposed to be compensated by the absolute power which they possess over them during

of luxurious and debauched libertines—if I tried to warn them, they would never reform; and if I wished to disgrace them by a report, my influence at court would probably be inadequate to the purpose. I will therefore take no hasty step—but as they have ill-treated you on this occasion, allow me a little time to devise some mode of punishment."

"I see there is a difficulty in the matter," observed Teihchungyu, "and will not trouble your lordship farther—but I am a distant stranger, and unless my report had been made in time, there is reason to fear that my enemies might have contrived some diabolical * falsehoods after my departure, which I could not easily repel. Since the mirror of your lordship's bright intelligence has shone upon their offence, I shall depart with a mind at ease; but request you will have the goodness to place this report on record."

The commissioner expressed his satisfaction at such an arrangement. "I am deeply impressed with a sense of your moderation, sir,—may I beg you to pass a few days here, and give me an opportunity of evincing my esteem."

Teihchungyu, however, was anxious to proceed on his journey; and when the commissioner found he was not to be prevailed on, he presented him with

during life. In no country has the 'patria potestas' existed in a higher degree than in China.

* Ju kwei, ju hwŏ, 'like devils and imps.'

twelve taëls, which the youth accepted, and took his leave.

> The court had powers to aid him—but he scorn'd
> To insist on vengeance—and with candid eye,
> Dispassionate, survey'd the case perplex'd.

To learn where Teihchungyu next proceeded, the reader must consult a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MARRIAGE PRESENTS ARE REJECTED ON THEIR FIRST PROPOSAL, IN HATRED OF SUCH UNPRINCIPLED PLOTS.

Strange, did the nuptial rite occasion yield
To pamper hatred—strange, if two should wed,
Where only one is willing! The rude toils
In which he would involve his prey deny
Success—to power alone he looks for aid!
But the stern sire unshaken maxims sway,
Nor will he lightly view his daughter's welfare.—
Rather than contact foul his gem disgrace,
A blow should shatter it!

When he had left the commissioner, Teihchungyu related the whole substance of the conference to the old domestic, and desired him to report it to Shueypíngsin. —"Your lady," added he, "unequalled as she is for sense and firmness, in times past or present, inspires me with the highest esteem; and I only lament that circumstances prevent a more intimate friendship between us: but this is both the will of heaven and the ordinance of man—there is no remedy." So saying, he returned the horse to the steward, who bent his way homeward; while the youth himself hired a good mule, and proceeded on his journey towards his native city.

He came,—nor heeded many a toilsome league;
He went,—with heart all tied up in affection;

Deny

Deny not that a secret influence spreads
O'er kindred minds—there was a friend * did know
The latent sweetness of the silent lute.

We now turn to Kwoketsu, who, with his three profligate friends and their gang of hired ruffians, had received such a severe discomfiture from Teihchungyu. When they saw him seize their companion, and walk him out at the door in that haughty and insulting manner, their rage and shame deprived them of utterance. After an interval of silence, Shueyun was the first to speak. "We have miscalculated this business," said he; "but it is useless to be angry;—who could suppose that the young brute would prove so formidable!"

"Formidable as he is," replied Kwoketsu, "we should certainly have beat him, if he had not seized our friend, and thereby compelled us to refrain from falling on him. Our companion being safe, however, we must follow up this affair. Wait till I engage twenty or thirty men to go and cudgel him—that done, we will report him to the commissioner."

"Engage your men," said his friend Chang, "and I will provide some more to assist you." The other two agreed to do the same, and when they had set to work they soon ollected upwards of a hundred fellows,

* This has reference to the story of one who destroyed his lute on the death of a friend, complaining, 'that he was gone to whom its notes were known,'—and hence *Cheyin*, 'he who knows my notes,' is a poetical phrase for 'friend.' Thus slight are the allusions in Chinese poetry!

fellows, who with the four young men and Shueyun went down in a swarm to Teihchungyu's lodging, to take revenge on him.

On their arrival, however, they found that he was gone !—and great was their rage and disappointment. Shueyun proposed that they should keep themselves united for revenge; but Kwoketsu objected to this as useless. "Let me report him to the commissioner," said he; "his lordship will certainly catch him."

"But he belongs to another province," observed Shueyun, "and is out of our commissioner's jurisdiction—he cannot seize him, therefore."

"I will find a way to seize him," replied the other;—"let us four combine in an accusation, declaring that he boasted himself more than a match for an army, and that, evidently intent on rebellion, he betrayed his ferocious disposition and made an assault upon our whole party. We will rouse the commissioner by the report that he has already taken measures for revolt, and persuade his lordship to address the emperor. The address being sent, we four may despatch messengers to our respective fathers, and prevail on them to procure a secret warrant for his apprehension. Then let his prowess be what it may, he will find it of little use."

The whole party declared that this was an excellent scheme. A person was employed to draw up their report, to which the four young men set their names,

and

and Shueyun was adduced as witness. They then proceeded in a body to Tongchangfoo, and sent in their report in due order to the commissioner, who read it carefully, and perceived that it alluded precisely to the occasion of Teihchungyu's late complaint. His lordship would have annulled it altogether, on the ground of that previous report,—but was afraid lest they might accuse him of leaning to one side of the question. He would then have summoned the four young men into court,—but was fearful, again, of affronting their rank. Perceiving, however, that Shueyun was cited as witness, he issued a warrant for his seizure and examination.

Now Shueyun, in venturing to offer himself as witness, had relied solely on the influence of his four powerful associates, to save him from unpleasant consequences; but seeing the commissioner's warrant for his single examination, and considering his own unsupported weakness, his spirits entirely forsook him, and he began to tremble all over. The emissaries of the commissioner treated him with no ceremony whatever, but were dragging him off, dead or alive,* when he called out in tribulation to the four young men, "Alas! how is this? Let me beg you, gentlemen, to go with me, for if I, a person of no consideration,

* In Chinese courts, there is sometimes little difference between the treatment of a witness, and that of a prisoner. They are both very roughly handled, and the witnesses occasionally put to the torture.

deration, am examined alone, I may be compelled to say something that will prove the ruin of our cause."

" We ought to accompany him !" exclaimed they altogether, and would have gone in a body,—but they were prevented.

" His lordship ordered us to bring Shueyun by himself," said the officers;—" who do you think will dare to take you all with him?" They were thus compelled to remain where they were, and let their friend go by himself; and the officers, hurrying him into court, knelt down and reported that they had brought the witness.

" Hand him up here," said the commissioner, and he was carried in front of the seat of justice, where they made him kneel down. Being interrogated if he was Shueyun, the witness to the late transaction, he replied in a great fright, that he was. —" And did you offer voluntarily to become evidence on this occasion," inquired the commissioner, " or did those four persons compel you ?"

" I was not compelled to become evidence," replied Shueyun,—" nor did I wish it myself; but having heard the treasonable words of this Teihchungyu, I could not avoid it."

" It would appear, then, that he really intended rebellion ?" said the commissioner; to which the other very readily answered in the affirmative.—" Let me

me hear you repeat the treasonable expressions," demanded the judge.

" He boasted, that with a sword in his hand, he would sustain the attack of a whole army."

" And pray did you alone hear these words, or were there other persons present ?"

" Had I alone heard him, it might look like a false charge," replied Shueyun ; " but the four young men were present, and when they had resolved to become his accusers, they fixed upon me as a witness."

" Then it is my belief that you were all plotting together !" exclaimed the judge.—" Where did this meeting take place ?"

Wholly unprepared for such an examination, Shueyun was at a loss what to answer, and began at length to stammer,—which his judge instantly perceiving, called for the torturing apparatus ; and the executioners, answering like so many tigers or wolves with a fierce cry, threw down a set of ancle-squeezers before the prisoner's face. His spirits now entirely forsook him, and his colour became of an earthen hue.

The commissioner struck the table with his fist, and exclaimed, " I again demand of you where this happened ? Why do you not answer ?"

Shrunk into a heap with terror, and deprived of the power of reflexion, Shueyun replied at once " that it was in the house of Kwoketsu."

" But this Teihchungyu belongs to the city Ta-ming,"

ming," said the judge;—" what could he be doing there?"

" He heard that Kwoketsu was a person of high connexions, and came to assail him in his house under the plea of a visit."

" And what were you doing there yourself?"

" Kwoketsu is my son-in-law, and as I am constantly at his house, I chanced to be present on this occasion."

" Were they drinking together when you met them—or talking—or quarrelling?"

Thus abruptly interrogated, Shueyun knew not what to say, and would gladly have remained silent;—but the commissioner burst upon him again. " I am acquainted with the whole of this business," said he, " and if you do not confess every circumstance, you old villain, I will presently torture you to death."

Shueyun's terror obliged him to confess that the parties were drinking together.—" And pray did you drink with them?" demanded the judge. To which the other replied in the affirmative.

" In what manner did the three young men join the party?"

" They came in, like me, separately, and without any previous intention."

" And did they take a part in the drinking?"

" They did," said Shueyun.

" But if you were all drinking together in concert, you

you must have been taking part with him in his treason—how comes it that you appear as his accusers then?"

"Kwoketsu had no bad motive in detaining the other to drink with him; but Teihchungyu, once intoxicated, betrayed himself altogether. He overturned the table, seized one of the number, and knocked about the whole party. He then braved the four young men with those treasonable words; and added, that he would exterminate their families, and convert their dwellings into a camp. Their fears led them to thr w themselves under your lordship's protection—if they had been leagued with him, they would never have dared to betray themselves."

"I cannot believe this story of his seizing one, and beating the rest," said the judge. "Do you persist in declaring that they had a fray?"

"To prove it," replied Shueyun, "your lordship need only send somebody to inspect the broken cups and bowls, which were left on the floor."

"But he was a single and unfriended stranger," observed the commissioner, "and you, with all your crowd of dependants, must surely have overpowered him—why then come and pretend that he was exciting rebellion?"

"Though single," answered the prisoner, "his strength was such, that the whole party were unequal to cope with him; and Kwoketsu with his companions, seeing

seeing his extraordinary power, and hearing what he said, thought it necessary to make their report."

"Has this Teihchungyu been seized?" inquired his lordship.

"His fierceness and strength made it quite impossible to stop him," said Shueyun, "and he has escaped."

The commissioner charged his clerk to be careful in recording the whole evidence. "You old slave!" exclaimed he to Shueyun—"this is nothing more, according to your own account, than a drunken quarrel! —how dare you make up such a story about treason? Teihchungyu, with all his strength, was but a single person—what should he do with an attempt at rebellion? His speech was a mere unmeaning boast, without a shadow of guilt in it! You say he has escaped—but hear me: he has anticipated you, and complained to me of your plotting together for his ruin. It appears that you really did drink together, and had a fray—that he was single and unfriended against you five, and all your followers, which alone proves that you were in league against him—and the charge of treason is altogether false. These four young men, however, are of good family, and could never have agreed to make this false report—it is *yourself*, you old slave, who owe a grudge to Teihchungyu, and come here with your fine story to deceive me!—This is not to be endured!" So saying he took out

out six tallies* and threw them on the floor as a signal to his people, who instantly seized Shueyun, and laid him at full length on the ground, where they stripped him, and held him by the head and feet, ready to be beaten.

Half dead with terror, he roared out with all his might, "Most excellent sir! consider the honour of my family, and spare me."

"Who are your family, that I should consider them?" said the commissioner.

"I am own brother to Shueykeuyih," replied the prisoner.

"That being the case," observed his lordship, "you can tell me who has charge of his household in his absence?"

"My brother has no son," replied the culprit; "my niece alone takes care of his household in unprotected solitude. She had lately to thank your lordship's goodness in issuing a notice, prohibiting all persons from molesting her,—since which she has enjoyed perfect quiet, and her family are truly grateful."

"So far you have spoken truth," said the commissioner, "and if you wish to be spared, you will tell me what enmity you bear to Teihchungyu, to seek his ruin in this manner."

Held down on the ground by the ministers of justice, Shueyun

* Slips of wood, each of them representing five blows with the bamboo.

Shueyun could do no better, in that deplorable condition, than try to save himself by telling the whole truth. He therefore confessed "that there was less ground of enmity on his own part, than on that of Kwoketsu, who regarded Teihchungyu as his rival in the pursuit of Shueypingsin."

"Well," cried the commissioner, "in consideration of your family, and the respectable connexions of these four youths, I will spare you; but go quickly and tell them, that they had much better stop their prosecution and be quiet." So saying, he desired one of his clerks to accompany Shueyun, and to take with him the two different reports which had been presented, together with a copy of Shueyun's evidence, for the information of the young men.—"Tell them," added he, "that the investigation of their case is quite indifferent to myself; but if I were to stir the matter farther, it would prove extremely inconvenient to all of them.—Now away with the prisoner!"

Shueyun ran out after the clerk, like one who had escaped from the custody of the infernal fiends. "Ah!" said he, with a grimace, on seeing his four friends, "this life of mine has been in some danger! The commissioner discovers your faults like a mirror;—there is no deceiving *him!* Let us be away with all speed."

They were seized with amazement on finding that Teihchungyu had anticipated them. "We thought," cried they, "that he would be too happy in making his

his escape !—who could have guessed at his coming here before us? We have miscalculated him." Observing the extreme fright of Shueyun, they became altogether depressed, and were glad to send in a note of acknowledgment to his lordship, and then separate quietly to their homes.

The rest of the party gradually forgot their resentment; but Kwoketsu could not dismiss the subject from his thoughts. Wondering at the long silence of his friend Chingkee, whom he had despatched to Peking, he sent off a trusty domestic to urge him to write a report of his success.

> Until the winged messenger arrives
> Suspense prevails. With sidelong listening ear
> He waits th' expected sound. Can aught prevent
> The flower propitiously t'unfold its leaves?
> All closely doth it guard its golden bell?

Now when Chingkee and his attendants had reached the capital, they waited on the minister, and presented the letter from his son. The letter being read, the bearer was called in, and permitted to sit down, while the minister inquired minutely into the reasons of his son's wishing so earnestly to marry Shueypingsin—" For," said he, " this young lady's father is in exile, and the match cannot be considered as equal."

" Your lordship's son," replied the emissary, " discovered that she was the most perfect of her sex; for unrivalled as she is in the graces of her person and the goodness

goodness of her disposition, her accomplishments surpass all that is known of even gifted persons. These were his reasons for vowing that he would obtain her in marriage."

"What a silly boy!" exclaimed the minister, smiling, "to send you all the way hither, and try to persuade me to take a journey to the frontier for the purpose of soliciting her father—when he might have engaged the intervention of the local magistrates, and espoused her at once."

"Most assuredly," answered Chingkee, "he did not neglect to solicit their assistance; he made use besides of innumerable stratagems, and exhausted all his endeavours in the pursuit; but this Shuepingsin eluded him with the utmost ease, and it ended in his losing her. The two local magistrates were not singular in failing to subdue this lady—the new commissioner himself, who is your lordship's pupil, in vain exerted his friendly offices, and issued two peremptory orders limiting a month for the completion of the nuptials. Every one declared that now she *must* yield; they little knew the resolution and talent of this Shueypingsin—she herself wrote an address to the emperor, recommending the degradation and punishment of the commissioner, and sent one of her own people to Peking to strike on the drum and present it."

"What!" exclaimed the minister with astonishment, "is it possible that a young girl should possess such

temerity?—was she not afraid that the commissioner would destroy her?"

"Far from it," replied the other, "she waited until her messenger had been gone three days, and then ventured to present a copy of her address to the commissioner himself in his public court. Alarmed at its contents, his lordship entreated the young lady to give him a description of her messenger, that he might pursue and bring him back:—and having thus discovered that she was no ordinary female, nor one whom he might lightly provoke, he affixed an order to her gates, prohibiting all persons from molesting her. When your lordship's son found that the commissioner himself was unable to subdue the lady, he became desperate, and had no way left but to charge me with an earnest message, entreating you to obtain for him this excellent maiden in marriage, as an example of a perfect union."

The minister was both astonished and pleased by what he heard. "I do not wonder," said he, "at my foolish son's perseverance, after what you relate of this young lady's rare qualities; but her father is a very stubborn and unbending character, difficult of access, and one with whom, although a native of the same district, I have never had much intercourse. Moreover, he has no son—only this single daughter, and I am not aware of his entertaining any present wish for her marriage. Such a proposal from me, some time back, would

would certainly have been ill-received; but his present situation leaves a way open, and if I offer the alliance to him now, I do not fear his rejecting it."

"How will your lordship proceed in this matter?" inquired Chingkee.

"The proper method would be to despatch some relative as negociator," replied the minister, "and when he had given his consent, to send the presents; but he is exiled to the distance of between one and two hundred leagues, and whom can I send? To employ one of inferior rank would be disrespectful; yet how can any person of high station proceed to that distance?—besides, there is nobody of this description on very friendly terms with him. I had better write a letter myself, and prepare some presents, all of which I will trouble you, sir, to take charge of."

"It is doubtless the shortest way for your lordship," said the other, "to propose the match yourself in writing; and if it contains a hint that you will assist him through his difficulties, the need in which he stands of your power and influence will naturally induce him to give his consent. But should he still remain obstinate, there are officers of authority at his place of exile, —you may charge me with communications to these, and we shall no doubt either prevail on him, or force him to comply."

The minister approved of this counsel, and when all things had been prepared, a day was selected on which

our emissary, attended as before by two chosen domestics, proceeded on his mission.

> 'Twixt kindred natures only may be sought
> Fit union, compass'd oft with utmost toil:
> While the Three stars* deny their rays benign,
> All vainly is the distant suit preferr'd!

While Shueykeuyih officiated at the military tribunal, it happened that the frontier was invaded, and he undertook, on his own proper responsibility, to recommend a leader named Howheaou, who was accordingly despatched with troops to protect the border. This leader, being a native of the north-west, was impetuous, bold, and unceremonious in his deportment, and when he had received his commission, proceeded at once in search of the enemy, without waiting to consult any of the other commanders on the station. These were so much piqued at his conduct, that they secretly withdrew all assistance from him, and he being thus left alone without any auxiliaries, engaged the enemy for a whole day at a disadvantage, and ended with very doubtful success. The others combined in representing that he had mismanaged his command, and he was accordingly arrested and thrown into prison.

The effect of this disgrace of the general was to involve his patron Shueykeuyih, who was adjudged to have recommended an unfit person, and being put upon his trial, was forthwith condemned to distant exile. His independent disposition left him few or no friends in power,

* See Note, vol. i. p. 251.

power, and none stepped forward to assist him in this emergency. His sentence, therefore, was soon carried into effect. More than a year had now elapsed since his banishment, during which time his mind dwelt with unceasing solicitude upon his daughter; while, close prisoner as he was at several hundred leagues distance from his home, he could take no measures whatever in regard to her welfare.

He was sitting one day at leisure, when it was announced that an emissary from the minister at Peking waited for an interview with him. Though exiled and out of favour, the rank and dignity of an officer of state still remained; yet it did not befit him, under all circumstances, to be too haughty and reserved. Ignorant, therefore, of the motives which could induce the minister to make this communication, he desired that the messenger might enter. Chingkee accordingly made his appearance, attended by his two servants, and first presented a ticket with his own name, stating that he was a friend of Kwoloongtung. The exile received him as a guest, and when they had taken their seats, and drank tea together, opened the conversation thus. "Since it has pleased his gracious majesty to banish me, I cannot look on myself as the equal of a minister of the palace; you too, sir, are wholly unknown to me—I am quite ignorant, therefore, what could lead you to brave the difficulties of so long a journey, and seek me in such a place as this?"

The

The messenger bowed low as he replied: "I am an obscure individual, and should not have ventured to intrude on your lordship: but being a friend and dependent of the minister, he despatched me on a subject which nearly concerns himself. I accordingly overlooked the length of the journey, and have the great presumption to wait upon your lordship."

"I am a native of the same district with the minister," said Shueykeuiyh; "yet the difference of our respective duties has kept us very much asunder; and by my exile to this spot, he is removed from me as far as the clouds from the earth. I am, therefore, perplexed to understand what commands he can have for me, that should bring you to such a distance. Perhaps the council think that my offence was judged too lightly, and wish to make it capital?"

"On the contrary," replied Chingkee, "the minister declares that he shall presently clear up your lordship's case entirely. The real subject of my mission is this: The minister's eldest son has reached the age of marriage, and no appropriate match presented itself, until he discovered the admirable character and accomplishments of the young lady your daughter, which made him wish to unite his unworthy son to this lofty branch of your lordship's house. But it pleased heaven to place obstacles in the way, and your exile at this place made it difficult to despatch the proper negociators on the occasion. He might have waited until your lordship's restoration

restoration to office; but was fearful of passing the vernal season:* necessity, therefore, compelled him to write this letter, and prepare a few poor presents, to supply the place of a proper 'helve for the hatchet.'† So saying he took the letter from his attendants, and presented it with a low obeisance, adding, that he trusted his lordship would give his assent to the request it contained.

Shueykeuyih took the letter, and reading it carefully over, perceived that it agreed with what he had heard from the bearer. "This Kwoloongtung," thought he to himself, "owes his station at court entirely to supple flattery: he does not belong to my school. That son of his, too, has a name for being dissipated and worthless; he is no match for my daughter. Besides, they are very near neighbours; and the proposal must certainly have been made to herself, before they sent to me at this distance. But their sending hither proves that they have already failed in that quarter; and did I lightly yield my consent, in opposition to my daughter's inclinations, it were a sad mistake." So placing the letter in his sleeve, he addressed Chingkee thus: "It is very true that the father's consent is the customary and approved regulator of marriage; but every

* 'The season of peach-blossoms.' See vol. i. p. 246.

† Refers to a passage in the Sheeking, where negociators are said to be as necessary to a marriage, as the helve to the hatchet.

every thing in the world that has a rule, has also an exception;—wherever there are general maxims, there are likewise particular cases. That I, a person in disgrace, should have to thank the minister for selecting my poor daughter, on so distinguished an occasion, must be a subject of great pride and satisfaction to myself. I was for five years absent from my family at Peking, and have been upwards of a year in exile;—I was even then a hundred leagues from home, and now I am as far again from the capital. Without a son, and this my only daughter so unlike the generality of her sex, I have always viewed her in the light of a son, and placed my whole household under her charge. With regard to marriage, I have long since told her that she was free to make her own choice; and this, though not in exact conformity with custom, is suitable enough to the present case. If Kwoketsu thought my daughter not unworthy of him, there were the two local magistrates to supply the place of the parents, and my own brother to act the part of a relative. Why then did he not tie the silken knot, and effect the union?—While all was favourable to him at hand, what should make him send to me at such a distance?"

"Your lordship's view of the subject is very just," said the messenger, "and Kwoketsu's mind being set on this excellent union, while circumstances prevented the accomplishment of his wishes in the regular course, he applied

applied to the local magistrates, as well as to the young lady's relative; all of whom readily assented, and even settled the preliminaries: but after much had passed on both sides, your daughter was at length imperative in making her father's consent the necessary condition of the union. The minister accordingly, with due preparation, sent me on this hasty journey to obtain your lordship's acquiescence."

When he heard that his daughter had refused her consent, Shueykeuyih was persuaded that she must have a strong objection to the union, and therefore replied, " My daughter's determination to await her father's consent, and the minister's application for the same, are in perfect accordance with established rule; I, however, am here in the character of the emperor's prisoner—a condemned criminal, and it would be improper for me to assume the respected guise of the father of a family. I am still uncertain of my future fate;—how, then, shall I presume to controul my household? During this year, and more, I have not had a word of communication with my daughter; and while my offence is yet unexpiated, and his majesty's sentence yet unrepealed, were I to be arranging her marriage at this distance, it would be a proof at once of disrespect to the emperor, and of forgetfulness to my own situation. Would not my offences be aggravated thereby?—I dare have nothing to say to this proposal."

" What

" What your lordship observes," answered the emissary, " is quite conformable with your high station, and well-known integrity: the forms, however, attending the conduct of the proposed match being necessarily limited by your present situation, your private and verbal consent, once given, would effect the happy union: and, admitting that it reached his majesty's knowledge, the imperial indulgence would not consider it harshly."

" You seem, sir," observed the exile, " to think that outward forms may be dispensed with, and to be unaware that there is something more* than mere forms which must be attended to. While I myself am in adversity, and my daughter alone, unprotected, and unable to offer any opposition, it would have been natural in her unfortunate situation had she submitted to the match, however irregularly proposed: but if in the midst of her difficulties she remains undismayed, and still insists on her father's consent, this is the conduct of a strictly virtuous daughter—and I, as her father, cannot but return it by a corresponding example on my own part. Did we discuss all that propriety demands on this occasion, it would appear, too, that the circumstances of rank and dignity should be considered. Any undue usurpation in an inferior station is presumption; and an attempt to degrade real dignity is contempt and disrespect. Now I myself, being in banishment and disgrace,

* Lit. ' The substance of forms.'

grace, cannot presume, for fear of the former imputation, to accept this proposal. Had it been made with the customary forms, while I possessed all my consequence at court near the emperor's person, then well: —but why take advantage of my present situation, and without any previous communication between us, send a mere letter in this abrupt and unusual style to obtain my consent? Is not this the height of contempt?—consider it yourself, sir."

Chingkee was struck dumb by this reasoning, but after an interval of silence resumed. "I am too ignorant and insignificant an individual to judge of such high matters, and though sent by the minister to obtain your lordship's consent, am not worthy of influencing the result in any way; but if proper forms have been omitted, I trust you will excuse and teach me better—it will be well if the insufficiency of such a person as myself does not hinder so important an alliance."

"You have performed your part perfectly well, sir," said Shueykeuyih, "but in a careful consideration of this proposal, I am led by several reasons to decline it as inexpedient."

"What is there to make your lordship think so?" asked the other.

"My first reason is, that the minister is a person in full power and dignity, while I am in exile and disgrace—for me, therefore, it is a presumptuous alliance

alliance—secondly, my daughter is living motherless and orphaned in the south, while her father, a condemned criminal, is far banished in the north; our communication is cut off, and she cannot ask my advice—thirdly, my destiny is unhappy, and I am compelled to place my only daughter in the situation of a son. If I give her away in marriage, my house remains solitary—if I receive a son-in-law at home, the hall of my ancestors admits a foreign surname. Besides, it is never allowable to leave the contracting of the marriage union to the young persons themselves, or to chuse a son-in-law whose face one has never beheld. I beg, sir, that you will oblige me by making a handsome excuse on my behalf."

In spite of all that the other could urge, Shueykeu-yih remained inflexible, but at the same time provided his visitor with a lodging at a small monastery in the neighbourhood. After considering the matter for two or three days, Chingkee determined that nothing now remained but to present his credentials from the minister to the civil and military authorities of the frontier,—who accordingly came, some to persuade, and others to threaten the exile into compliance. His anger was roused by this treatment, and he said to Chingkee, "My offences have been against the emperor, not against Kwoloontung;—why then does he persecute me in this manner? They

are

are confined, besides, to my own person, and do not involve my secluded and innocent daughter;—why is she thus bitterly harassed? I will trouble you, sir, to inform the minister plainly from me, that since my exile I have been accustomed to view my remaining existence as a very short one. His assistance I do not wish for,—and though he endeavour to ruin me, I fear him not;—as for the presents and the letter, I beg you will carry them back with you." Our emissary now knew that his cause was hopeless, and therefore packed up immediately, and returned on his way to Peking.

Hard task, to make imprint on steadfast rock,
Or stubborn iron bend—hard task, to strive
'Gainst sternest natures! Rather than endure
Th' oppressor's wrong, e'en death the brave would welcome!

When the minister had heard from his emissary a minute account of the unsuccessful attempt to bend the exile to their purpose, his anger was violently roused, and he meditated a hundred schemes to ruin his enemy. In the course of a few months, it luckily occurred for him that the border was again attacked, and those who had to guard it defeated and slain. The members of the military tribunal were at a loss whom to recommend, and the emperor accordingly commanded his great officers of state to select a proper leader. The minister seized this opportunity to present an address, in which he represented that the

repeated

repeated defeats on the frontier had all arisen from the late member of the military board originally recommending the unsuccessful general Howhcaou: —that the mere exile of Shueykeuyih, therefore, was inadequate to his offence; and that while the fate of the imprisoned leader remained undecided, the officers on the border would not exert themselves. He accordingly entreated his majesty to issue a commission to the Triple court of High criminal appeal,* first of all to take the leader out of prison, and pass judgment on him according to his deserts, and then to convey back Shueykeuyih from his place of banishment and condemn him to death likewise; thus the different tribunals would be more cautious in future with regard to whom they chose, and the newly appointed leaders having a motive to exert themselves, the border hostilities would be happily terminated.

The imperial assent was in a short time received, and the Triple court summoned before them the imprisoned general to receive judgment. But to learn the result—to see Letaepih once more, and Kwotszee* again

* *Sanfăsze*, consisting of a member of the Criminal tribunal—a member of the Censorate—and one of the *Talesze*, or Court of Equity, —to whom, in their joint capacity, lie all appeals from the Criminal tribunal.

† The first of these was a well known poet, and sometime statesman under the dynasty Tăng; and the second, a great leader of the same period.

again in the world, we must proceed to the following chapter.

period. The latter being condemned to suffer death on account of a defeat, was already on his way to the place of execution, when he was saved from punishment by Letaepih becoming personally answerable for his future success. The leader was reprieved and restored to his command, and having performed great achievements became promoted to the rule of a petty state.

CHAPTER XIV.

"TEIHCHUNGYU DISCOVERS THE QUALITIES OF THE VALIANT LEADER, AND HAZARDS HIS LIFE TO SAVE HIM."

The pamper'd, dull-eyed judges ne'er discern'd
The hero's merit; but with false pretexts
Confin'd his person, and his death decreed!
He deem'd himself all lost;—but timely aid
Snatch'd him from instant peril, and the realm,
Safe through his valour, vindicates his fame!

THE day on which the Triple court ordered the leader to be taken out of prison to attend his trial, happened to be the same on which Teihchungyu entered the capital on his private business. The young man proceeded to make inquiries at home, and asked the reason of his father's absence. "He is sitting on the trial of the defeated general," replied his mother—"him whom they are going to condemn to death. The case was tried long ago; but his majesty's commands were lately received to determine his fate. The occasion being urgent, your father left home to attend the court at daylight."

"But I hear that the frontier is subject to daily alarms," exclaimed Teihchungyu; "why are they condemning the leader to death, when leaders are most wanted. I trust my father has made up his mind on the

the subject. Your son will go and see what they are about."

"It is very well for you to do that," replied his mother; "but remember that this is a most serious affair, pertaining immediately to the emperor:—you should be cautious how you speak concerning it."

He assented to this counsel, and proceeded with one of his father's attendants to the place of trial, where he found the general already condemned to lose his head. He was bound, and awaited only the time fixed for his execution, which was to be shortly after noon. Teih-chungyu made his way through the crowd to look at him, and observed that the prisoner was not more than about thirty years of age, with an aspect no less stern and formidable than a tiger's,* and an exterior that denoted the highest degree of energy and resolution. "How came so promising a person as this in such a situation?" exclaimed Teihchungyu to himself; and going up to the stranger, "Leader," said he, "your commanding presence persuades me that you are a valiant warrior—by what chance did you fail to defeat the enemy?"

Roused by such a question, the other replied straightway in a voice of thunder: "The brave man views death as he does his return home—the chances of battle affect him not. With the strength of a thousand

* The original might be almost literally translated by "bearded like the pard."

pounds' weight * in these arms, and the perfect knowledge of the military art,† what have I to do with defeat or failure ?"

Teihchungyu now begged him to explain the reasons of his being in his present situation ; but the other declined.—" When things have arrived at this pass," said he, " it is useless to speak."

" As you please," replied the young man ;—" but were you again to command on the frontier, could you answer for your success ?"

" I would engage," exclaimed the other, " to slay their leader, and seize their standard, as my own proper work,—and make no boast of it !"

Teihchungyu asked no more questions ; but, full of resentment and vexation, hurried directly into the court where the three judges were seated. " My lords," exclaimed he, " your high office imposes on you a sincere regard to your country's welfare. Why then, when the border is attacked, and none can be found to defend it, do you return an obsequious report, and condemn this leader to death ?—inflicting thereby a deep injury on the national interest. Is it a public or a private motive that urges you to act in a manner so unworthy of you ?"

The

* The Chinese estimate a soldier's strength by the bow which he can draw—and the strength of the bow they measure by the dead-weight required to bend it.

† Literally, 'the eighteen military arts,' *i. e.* the use of the different arms, &c.

The three members of the Triple court had not ventured, after the emperor's approval of his minister's advice, to record their dissent. At the same time, however, that they confirmed the sentence of beheading, and waited only for the imperial warrant to execute the same, they still felt a secret uneasiness at the prisoner's fate; and when a person was seen entering the court, and thus loudly addressing them, they experienced a mixed sensation of alarm at the disturbance, regret for their sentence, and resentment at the intrusion. Discovering, on a closer view, that it was Teihchungyu, the other two members felt unwilling to be harsh; but his father struck the table with fury, and rated him in round terms, demanding how he presumed thus madly to address so high a court, assembled there by imperial commission to decide on a capital case? —"The laws admit of no private feelings," cried he, and ordered the intruder into custody; but Teihchungyu loudly exclaimed, "My lord, you are mistaken! The emperor himself suspends the drum at his palace gate, and admits all to state their hardships without reserve. May I not be allowed to right the injured before this very tribunal of life and death?"

"What have you to do with the prisoner," inquired his father, "that *you* should right his case?"

"He is not even an acquaintance," replied Teihchungyu. "I can have no reasons on his own account; but the difficulty of finding his substitute impels me to

intercede for one who is so worthy of being the emperor's general."

"The emperor's general must live or die as the emperor pleases," cried Teihying;—"what concern is it of your's, that you may behave in this mad style? Seize him instantly!"

The attendants now stepped up to lay their hands on the young man; but the other two members of the court interfered. "Hold!" cried they; and calling him up to the judgment table, they pacified Teih-chungyu with good words.

"Worthy friend, we do not blame your well-intentioned spirit; but the nation has its laws, judges their dignity, and prisoners their sentence. It is not allowable to intrude in this rude manner. The leader has already been imprisoned for more than a year, and Shueykeuyih, who recommended him, exiled on his account. His offences being proved by several concurrent authorities, how shall he now be found guiltless by his judges? The nation's laws, the judges' dignity, and the prisoner's case, alike forbid this! Admitting, however, that we proposed a mitigation of his punishment, it would be impossible to remit the heaviest part of the sentence.* The minister has advised his

* That is, he must be strangled, if not beheaded. The well-known prejudice of the Chinese against the mutilation or dismemberment of the body, renders the sentence of decapitation much more terrible to them than strangulation. It is evidently to a feeling somewhat similar among his own countrymen that Juvenal alludes, when, speaking of the fate of Pompey, he adds:

"Hoc

his decapitation—the emperor has assented—how then shall we attempt to oppose it?

"Alas!" replied Teihchungyu, sighing, "your lordships' words would better become those worthless ministers who abandon what is right for the sake of their places, their emoluments, or their personal safety; they pertain not to that disinterested spirit, which identifies your country's welfare with your own! Were the truth as you state it, the lowest capacity might be more than sufficient to conduct the business of the state; what need of personages of your lordships' weight to minister for the sovereign! Let me ask you, what meant that saying of the ancient emperor, 'Thrice* be death delayed;'—or of the ancient minister, 'In three cases only be death inflexibly awarded.' Your reasonings, if true, would go far to deprive these sacred characters of their reputation for wisdom."

The two other judges answered not a word, but his father broke silence.—"Foolish boy, say no more! this man's death is inevitable."

Teihchungyu, however, rejoined with warmth, "Brave men and worthy leaders are the rare productions of heaven; if your lordships are inflexible, and persist in condemning

"Hoc cruciatu
"Lentulus, hâc pœnâ caruit, ceciditque Cethegus
"*Integer*, et jacuit Catilina *cadavere toto*."

* Such is the actual practice, in ordinary cases, at the present day; first, by the local magistrate, who refers to the provincial judge; next, by the provincial judge, who refers to the criminal tribunal; lastly, by the criminal tribunal, which refers to the emperor.

condemning Howheaou to death, let me entreat you to condemn me with him!"

"But his guilt and incapacity have been proved," said Teihying; "it is only condemning a worthless servant;* is there any thing extraordinary in that?"

"Men's capacities are not so easily known," replied his son; "the courage and ability of this leader are such, that if he be reappointed to the frontier he shall prove another 'wall of a thousand leagues.'† No hero of the age may compare with him."

"Allowing his capacity to be great," observed the father, "his delinquency is still greater."

"The ablest leaders," said Teihchungyu, "must ever be liable to commit errors, and hence it is customary for the emperor to reprieve them for a while, that they may redeem themselves by acts of merit."

"But in that case," remarked one of the judges, "somebody must be surety: will you venture to be answerable for him?"

"If Howheaou be restored to his command," replied Teihchungyu, "I entreat that my own head may answer for his misconduct, as the just punishment of such rashness!"

The other two judges now turned to Teihying, and said, "Since your lordship's son thus publicly tenders his

* *Nootae*, 'A useless horse;' applied sometimes by the ministers to themselves in addressing the sovereign.

† The Chinese name for their great wall.

his personal responsibility, it befits us to make a formal representation, and request his majesty's pleasure." Teihying was compelled, under the circumstances of the case, to assent to this: the leader was accordingly remanded to prison; and Teihchungyu, being called upon to enter into a written engagement on the spot, was placed in custody for the time being. The three members of the court next prepared their report, and sent it up in due order. As an urgent express had just arrived from the border, this reply was received on the following morning to their address.

" An able leader being required on the frontier, the son of Teihying pledges himself for the ability of Howheaou to settle its disturbed state. We rejoice at such public spirit, remit for a while the general's punishment, and allow him to resume on trial his former command. We confer on him, moreover, a sword, as a special mark of authority, and command him to proceed with his troops to the succour of any part of the border which may be attacked. Should his merits deserve it, he will be promoted—but in the event of his failure, his head will be exposed on the frontier, as a warning to presumptuous incapacity. Shueykeuyih, who before recommended, and Teihchungyu who now supports him, will be rewarded or punished, according to the success or failure of the general. How sincerely do we hope that his past errors may serve but to enhance his future merits!—Let him reflect on the difference between falling

falling by the laws, and falling by the enemy!—Respect this."

When the emperor's pleasure was made known to the leader in prison, he first returned thanks in due form, and then issued forth from confinement. Previously, however, to entering on the business of his command, he mounted a horse and proceeded straight to make his acknowledgments to Teihchungyu. As each was fully able to appreciate the other's merits, their mutual satisfaction was great at the meeting. Teihchungyu detained the leader to dine with him, and they passed the remainder of the day very agreeably, in drinking and conversing of the art of war. They then bade adieu to each other, and the military tribunal, being sensible of the urgency of affairs on the frontier, made diligent arrangements for the supply of troops, and hastened the general's departure.

On his arrival at the border, although merely under a reprieve, the circumstance of a sword having been especially conferred by the emperor, secured him from any molestation on the part of the local commanders. Thus left at full liberty to exercise his discretion, he had to report five victories over the enemy in less than six months, and the frontier became at once restored to perfect tranquillity. The emperor expressed great satisfaction, and promoted his general. Shueykeuyih, who had at the first been restored to his station as *member* of the military tribunal, was in consequence of the leader's

leader's repeated successes, appointed *president* of the same. Teihchungyu, who had all the credit of being surety for the merits of the victorious Howheaou, was nominated by his majesty to an office in the imperial College ;—but he petitioned to be allowed to attain it in the regular course of literary promotion. As for the minister, he felt himself put to such shame, that he pleaded illness for remaining at home !

> To feed his selfish spleen did he annoy
> His nobler foe—but each vicissitude
> Of fate's incalculable maze once past,
> Too late repentance was the meed he earn'd !

Shueykeuyih, thus promoted and recalled to court, was at the height of his glory and happiness. Those civil and military authorities on the frontier, who had before so busily molested him at the instigation of the minister, were now utterly dismayed :—they all entreated his forgiveness in the most humble manner. But he was of too generous a temper to discuss the matter with them. Soon after his arrival at Peking, when he had attended an audience, and thanked the imperial bounty, he heard of the part which Teihchungyu had performed in the restoration and successes of the general—and also learned, for the first time, his heroic conduct in rescuing Hanyuen, his wife and daughter, from the palace of Takwae. The sense of his private obligations was equalled by his admiration of such heroic qualities, and soon after his promotion to the first

first place in the military tribunal, he proceeded to visit both father and son. Teihying received him, and after some trifling conversation, the President expressed a desire to see the Censor's son. Teihying, however, informed him, that the ensuing autumn being the return of the great triennial examination, Teihchungyu was studying in the retirement of the West-hills, and had thereby lost the honour of this meeting.

" The object of my visit," said the President, " was to express my obligations to both father and son. I am struck with a real admiration of such elevated qualities in so young a person. It would be a source of lasting satisfaction to see him but once :—fate, however, seems to have decreed that we should not meet."

" My wild and turbulent son," replied the Censor, " has acquired an empty reputation by his conduct, which to myself is a source of real concern, and regarding which I have often remonstrated with him. I cannot think him worthy of your lordship's praises."

" His heroism and love of rectitude deserve not to be stigmatized as wild and turbulent," said Shueykeuyih; " it is not the reputation, but the reality of excellence, that I admire in him,—and hence my great wish for an interview."

" Rude and untutored as he is," said Teihying, " my son will have reason to rejoice at your lordship's condescension; I will send him to wait upon you."

" If so," said the President, " I beg you will give me

me early notice, and let me be duly prepared to receive him." He repeated his earnest injunctions, and then took leave.

> He checks his steed where partial preference guides
> His choice, and specifies each latent wish:
> Why, and for whom, this earnest diligence!
> —'Twas all for him, the hero of our tale!

Teihying in fact did not desire that his son should be disturbed by visits just now; but he could not altogether decline the pressing advances of the President, and accordingly sent a messenger to the West-hills to acquaint Teihchungyu, and desire him to come and return the compliment which had been paid him.

His son, on receiving the message, thought to himself, "It was a mere call in acknowledgment of the services I happened to render him and the general—there is hardly any occasion for the meeting." He therefore said to the messenger, "Tell your lord that I am anxious to pursue my occupations here, and entreat he will decline for me any visits that may be paid us."

Teihying was persuaded, on the receipt of this answer, that it was the best course, and accordingly proceeded by himself to return the visit of the president. "My son has heard," said he, "of the honour which your lordship did him, and would have obeyed my summons to wait on you, did not indisposition prevent him. I therefore come to make his excuse;—but as soon as he goes out, he will certainly pay his respects."

"The worthies of old," replied Shueykeuyih, "were oftener

oftener heard of, than seen. This is the case of your lordship's son; and it inspires me with a still higher respect for him." When his visitor had departed, the president thought to himself, "My daughter's beauty and good sense are so surpassing, that I have long and unsuccessfully sought a proper match for her. Now the conduct and character of this Teihchungyu are exactly suitable, and I understand that he is still unmarried; besides which, there are my personal obligations to him. If I do not secure his alliance, I may be justly accused of missing the fittest occasion. But I am still ignorant of his figure and address, and must satisfy my curiosity by a personal interview."

With this resolution, he sent a messenger to find out if the youth were then at the West-hills, and received an answer in the affirmative. Very early on the following morning, therefore, without acquainting any one, he attired himself in an ordinary dress, and mounting a horse, went out quietly with only three or four private followers to visit Teihchungyu.

The notice* of the president's intended visit had reached the youth one morning, just as he was finishing breakfast. It renewed in his mind the remembrance of Shueypingsin, and threw him into a deep reverie. "How strangely—how unexpectedly," thought he, "do human events occur! In rescuing the leader from death, I have been the occasion of Shueykeuyih's recall and promotion.

* It is customary to give notice of a visit shortly before it takes place.

promotion. Had I never chanced to meet with Shueypingsin, my present connexion with her father might have enabled me to seek her in marriage, with every prospect of his consent. But, subject as we now are to calumny, not only is it unfit to make the proposal, but, admitting that her father hints it to myself, it must be declined:—for to accept it would be contrary to our reputation and our duty. Thus it turns out, that our friendship, our mutual services, and our chances of union, are all frustrated.—Oh, heaven! that we mortals should be so harassed!"

In the midst of these reflections, he on a sudden perceived walking into his lodging, habited in a plain dress, an elderly man with a long beard. The stranger approached, and accosted him thus:—"Friend, how difficult it is to get a sight of you! You do not mind making people pine for your society."

Thus taken by surprise, the youth did not guess who the stranger might be. "My disposition," replied he, "is so unsociable, that if you have thought of me, it was only because you had not seen me:—and now that we have met, I fear you will think no more about me."

So saying, he ushered his visitor in, and made the customary obeisance; which the other having returned, took hold of Teihchungyu's hand, and considering him awhile, replied, "Without seeing you, I could have but a vague idea of what you were;—but having once seen you, I shall think more of you than ever.

On

On my first return to the capital, I repaired to your house, and though I saw your father, had not the satisfaction of meeting yourself. I went home disappointed; and when your father honoured me with a visit, his excellent son would not confer on me his regards. I therefore come in this private manner to obtain an interview, and hope you will not be offended at the intrusion."

" What,"—exclaimed Teihchungyu with surprise, " it surely must be his lordship the President!"

" I am your disciple," replied the stranger, and then called an attendant to present his ticket.

" Your lordship," said Teihchungyu, " in considering the service, which I rendered the general, as instrumental in dispersing the light clouds which obscured your own brightness, has paid me a compliment which I cannot venture to claim."

" I come here," answered the President, " not so much to thank you for restoring me to life and honours, as from respect to one, who at so early an age is possessed of such extraordinary sagacity, and so much generous resolution—from my wish to view an extraordinary hero of modern times."

" It is extremely liberal and condescending in your lordship," said Teihchungyu, " thus to forego the privileges of your age and station. I fear I have been guilty of disrespect." He then invited his guest to take his seat, and ordered an entertainment to be laid out

out, of which, hurried and unprepared as it was, he invited the President to partake with him.

Shueykeuyih had a particular wish to prove the youth's talent and information, and accordingly plied him with questions on difficult subjects:—while Teih-chungyu, in consideration of the distance from which his distinguished guest had come to visit him, entertained him to his best, and conversed freely as if he had met with a friend. They discoursed of history and letters, and of the celebrated persons of antiquity—they treated of morals, and settled the true meaning of the maxims transmitted by the great sages—they discussed the principles of government, and adjusted their correct limits—and the abundant relish and acumen of their conversation had been thus sustained for some time, when the gestures and smiles of the President began to evince his surprise and satisfaction. He was endless in his praises, and complimented Teihchungyu with declaring "that his talents seemed to be the especial gift of heaven."

After some farther discourse, the President could no longer prevail on himself to disguise his wishes:—"I have an object at heart," said he, "which custom would forbid me to mention in the first instance to yourself; but as we are both of us far removed above the bondage of formal rules, I need not be afraid to speak."

"I stand in the relation of your lordship's son and junior,"

junior," replied Teihchungyu, "and, whatever you have to say, shall gratefully receive your instruction."

"It is my misfortune," said his guest, "to have no son, and only one daughter, who is eighteen this year. In speaking of her beauty, it befits me not to boast, that she is without an equal in the empire;—but as to her intellectual qualities, I believe that none but yourself can rival her within the Four Seas.* This may seem like a partial boast, and you are not bound to believe me;—let me beg you, then, to remember my words, and inquire of others; and should you find them true, you may perchance consent to weave the silken net, and conclude this excellent and auspicious union. Do not be displeased at my proceeding with so little ceremony, on an occasion of such delicacy and importance."

Teihchungyu listened in silence, and after a short pause sighed deeply as he exclaimed, "Oh, heaven! since thou hast so fitted us for each other, why afflict us with so wretched a destiny?—Alas, there is no remedy!" The president observed his sorrow, and inquired if he had contracted some other engagement; but the youth shook his head. "I might look abroad,"

* A phrase for their empire, to which we have a remarkable parallel among ourselves. Blackstone says, "that the law somewhat loosely phrases 'out of the kingdom of England,' by *extra quatuor maria.*" If the term be a *loose* one with reference to our insular country, it is a singularly *absurd* one as applied to China.

abroad," said he, " for a spouse within the limits of the empire, and find none but such as Wunkeun !"

" Then if not already contracted," observed his visitor, " you perhaps regard my daughter as no better than the rest of her sex."

" With her admirable perfections," said Teihchungyu, " a whole nation cannot fail to be acquainted, for she is a pattern of female excellence; but I lament that we have been doomed to meet in the crooked by-paths of trouble, instead of the high-road of regular espousal. Did I act like the robber-bird, that invades the dwelling to which it has no right, I should violate the great maxims of morality;—yet to sit still and lose the chance of so excellent an union has already filled me with regrets that will last through life; and your lordship's kind proposal can only aggravate my incurable sorrow !"

The president thought that Teihchungyu spoke in a mysterious, constrained, and unintelligible manner, and therefore said to him, " I know you to be of a frank and open temper; whatever may be your internal thoughts, pray speak them out plainly—why deal in such ambiguities ?"

" My lord," replied his host, " they are no ambiguities, but the sincere effusion of my feelings;—you will obtain an explanation of them when you return home."

Shueykeuyih's long absence from his household,

and that stoppage of all written communication which left him in entire ignorance of his daughter's proceedings—joined to the inexplicable character of Teihchungyu's words—made him fear lest there might be something which could not be readily divulged; so, without farther questions he finished his repast, and after some conversation on indifferent subjects, took his leave.

> He came, to see the pattern of his age:
> To question the most gifted of her sex,
> Return'd he—anxious thus, and full of toil,
> The care of those who scheme their offspring's good!

The president, on his way home, thought to himself,—"This is a most elegant and admirable young man! I must not give him up as my son-in-law. But his answer was quite unintelligible—as if willing, and as if not—as if pleased, and as if annoyed—what can be the reason of it? Perhaps he thinks some harm of my daughter;—but I know full well the natural goodness of her disposition, and that there is no hypocrisy about her. Some malicious report has been spread by Kwoketsu, in consequence of his failure to obtain her in marriage. It signifies not—let me go and settle the match with the father—then let the storm rage, it cannot hurt us!"

With this resolution he selected a fortunate day, and engaged one of his colleagues in office to break his

his mind to Teihying. The latter had learned that the minister's attempts to persecute Shueykeuyih while in exile, had all arisen at the instigation of his disappointed son, and this circumstance brought to his knowledge the extraordinary merits of Shueypingsin. He had already thought of uniting his son to her; his joy, therefore, was great on seeing the negociator arrive from Shueykeuyih—and he gave his hearty consent to the proposed match. The President, on receiving this favourable answer, immediately exchanged visits with the Censor, and invited him to an express entertainment on the occasion, as a precaution against any change of mind,—desiring his agent to urge the final conclusion of the marriage contract.

The Censor conferred with his lady on the subject. "Our son's age," said he, "requires that he should be married, and did we wait until he made up his own mind, it would not very soon happen. I find that this Shueypingsin is not merely beautiful in person, but of uncommon mental endowments. When Kwoketsu tried a hundred schemes to get possession of her, she foiled him by as many resources of her own, which proves her to be a superior young woman, and a fit match for our son. The proposal, too, coming from her father, should decide us on seizing so excellent an occasion."

"From all I hear," replied his lady, "of the vir-

tues and talents of Shueypingsin, I consider you should decide on the matter at once, without mentioning it to our son, for he will certainly make abundance of excuses."

Teihying expressed his concurrence with this advice, and accordingly, without informing their son, they prepared the presents, chose the day, and employed a friend to negociate and conclude the contract. When that was done, they sent a messenger to congratulate Teihchungyu. He was taken completely by surprise, and hurried into the city. "Marriage," said he to his father and mother, "is an affair of such consequence, that to secure welfare in the end, we should be the more tenacious of what is right in the beginning. If I hurry into this match, to which obstacles exist, from a mere admiration of beauty and talent, occasion will be afforded for scandal and misrepresentation, and disgrace attach to us through life."

—"Let me ask you," said his father, "is there any fault to be found with the young lady's looks?"

"She is doubtless composed of the finest elements in nature," exclaimed Teihchungyu:—"who shall say she is not beautiful!"

—"That being the case," said the Censor, "perhaps she is deficient in mental endowments?"

"The perfect ease and self-possession," replied his son, "with which she executed her unfathomable

plans,

plans, must amply disprove that—who shall deny her superior sense ?"

—" Perhaps, then," said Teihying, " there is something against her character ?".

" Were the character of Shueypingsin to be canvassed," exclaimed the young man, " there is nought that she should be afraid of, before gods or demons—nothing that need shun the light—who shall impeach her perfect correctness ?"

The Censor and his lady could not help laughing outright.—" If Shueypingsin," cried they, " is so perfect as you describe, and we have besides made a regular contract for you, what is there to apprehend from people's remarks ?"

" I presume to conceal nothing before you," replied Teihchungyu ;—" sleeping or awake, I have dwelt upon the retired virtues of this young lady, but despaired to possess her. If heaven seems now to second my wishes, what should make me assume scruples which I do not really feel ? But, unhappily, we are severed by destiny. I met and saw her under difficulties, and we rendered each other mutual services ;—which, though strict custom forbade them, were justified by the occasion, but which have nevertheless subjected us to calumny. Should we now contract marriage, our former acts will be construed as being performed with an ulterior view. I had better, therefore, even sacrifice so excellent a spouse, than

do

do what is contrary to strict rectitude." He then related minutely how he fell in with the agents of Kwoketsu, as they were carrying off the young lady—how he succoured her at the magistrate's—his subsequent illness and danger—and the way in which Shueypingsin conveyed him to her house, and nursed him.

When the Censor and his lady had heard their son's story, their joy and satisfaction were redoubled. "It is plain, from your own shewing," said they, "that Shueypingsin and yourself have a mutual claim upon each other. The subject is already public and declared, and you have neither of you reason to be ashamed of it. You commenced with difficulties and dangers, and acted as the occasion demanded—you end with a regular espousal, and all things are conducted in order. What suspicions need you wish to avoid? These scruples, at the present day, cannot dissipate any suspicion that might before have attached to you. You have acted consistently throughout, and the union accords with the strictest propriety. Feel no more anxious doubts on the subject, but return tranquilly to your studious retirement, and await at once your promotion and your marriage*—the chief consolation of our declining years."

Perceiving

* Literally, "greater and lesser promotion." The last is a phrase for marriage.

Perceiving that their minds were made up, Teih-chungyu felt he could urge no further objections for the present. "There is no occasion, thought he, to be very strenuous in my opposition; for, admitting that I consent, it is pretty certain that Shueypingsin herself will oppose it. Let me wait until the time arrives, and be guided by the occasion." With that he bade adieu to his father and mother, and returned to his occupations at the West-hills.

In the glad path of rectitude persists
The hero—equal scruples arm the maid!
O'er such the old* inhabitant o' th' moon
Remits his power—to such the liberty
Of some seems license.

The president was full of satisfaction at having secured Teihchungyu as the future husband of his daughter. He began to consider his long absence from home, and the dangers that continually beset persons in office; and at length petitioned the emperor for leave of absence, on the plea of impaired health. His majesty, however, in consideration of the hardship he had endured in his late exile, declined accepting the proffered resignation;†—but when the petition had been thrice repeated, he gave his consent. The absence was for one year; and the president was appointed to travel by post at the public charge,

* Yuĕlaou, 'the old man of the moon,' the Chinese god of marriage, who ties together, with an invisible silken cord, all predestined couples.

† This is considered as a great compliment: the minister insisting on his unfitness for his station, and the emperor declaring, on the other hand, that his talents cannot be spared.

charge, and to resume his functions at the expiration of the period. Shueykeuyih prepared with joy for his departure; and the news of the especial distinction conferred on him by the emperor, being rapidly spread, was soon carried to his native town.

The reporters had inscribed their intelligence on large red * tickets, announcing, in the first instance, the recall from exile—then the promotion to the station of president;—and now, lastly, the return home at the public charge. Shueypingsin, when she first heard the news, was unwilling to give it implicit credence, fearful of some new trick on the part of her enemies; and though, when the magistrates sent their own people to inform her, she could not do otherwise than believe the facts, she still remained wholly ignorant as to the causes of such sudden events. A couple of days had been thus passed by her in doubt and perplexity, when Shueyun hurried over, as if to make a merit of it, and asked his niece to guess who had been the author of her father's restoration to his dignities?

"I am quite ignorant on the subject," replied the young lady, "and was just now endeavouring to account for it."

"Then," said Shueyun," it was entirely occasioned by Teihchungyu addressing the emperor, and tendering his personal responsibility."

His

* The first reporters of good news have a customary claim to some reward. See vol. i. p. 108. Red is the colour of compliment and joy: the mourning colours being white, black, and a species of dull grey, or ash.

His niece smiled at this, and said it must be mere extravagance, for how should Teihchungyu, who was no minister of state, but a mere scholar, address his majesty?

"He was not responsible for my brother," replied her uncle, "but for the unfortunate leader on account of whose failure my brother was exiled, and with whose guilt and punishment he had become associated. When you rejected Kwoketsu on the plea of requiring my brother's consent, he engaged the assistance of his father, the minister, who despatched a messenger with a written proposal to my brother in exile. To his surprise, however, your father refused his consent; and the minister, full of rage and malice, took occasion of the troubles on the frontier to persuade the emperor that they were all occasioned by my brother's recommendation of the unfortunate general, who, together with his patron, ought to be condemned to death. His majesty consented, and the Triple court had already sent forth the general bound to his punishment, when Teihchungyu fell in with him, and being struck by his appearance, went straight before the tribunal, and offered himself as security that the prisoner, if again employed, should redeem his offence. They were obliged to report this to the emperor, who gave his permission; and the leader, being restored to his command on the border, proved himself a hero, and acquired great merit by slaying

slaying and dispersing the enemy. The emperor declared, with satisfaction, that your father had the credit of first recommending so worthy a personage, and accordingly revoked his sentence of exile, and raised him to the station of president of his tribunal. —Now if you revert to the author of all this, who was it but Teihchungyu?"

"What person told you this story?" inquired the young lady;—"I cannot believe it to be true."

"How not true?" exclaimed her uncle,—"it is in the gazette!"

"Well, then," said Shueypingsin, smiling, "you should go immediately and accuse him of treason—this *kidnapper of women*, who dared so rashly to present himself before the Triple court."

He perceived that his niece was quizzing him, but thought it best not to be offended,—so laughing it off as well as he could, "No more of that business," cried he; "I was drawn into it by a pack of silly young men, and shall know better than to heed them in future." With that he was glad to escape, and hide his confusion elsewhere.

Shueypingsin now began to soliloquize. "There would seem to be some extraordinary fate connecting Teihchungyu and myself. The accident that brought him to my succour was sufficiently extraordinary, but in addition to it all, my exiled father, who has not the most distant connexion with him, becomes restored

stored to favour through his means, although without his intention. This indeed is wonderful! But, strange as this may be, it would appear that our mutual services and gratitude are all in vain,—for our ultimate union is impossible! Heaven seems to have a purpose in it, which may not be discovered, though our crosses and perplexities are sufficienty apparent." Such were the melancholy reflections with which she passed her days and nights.

> With nature stedfast in the cause of right,
> Her gentle temper ever was alive
> To soft impressions—blending thus together
> The warmth of passion with the rigid rule
> Of principle, she shone example bright
> Of rarest excellence!

The president's approach was shortly afterwards announced to his daughter. The distinctions conferred on him by the emperor obliged the magistrates to go forth and receive him in state: while Shueyun himself failed not to accompany the throng beyond the city, mounted on horseback. Towards noon, Shueykeuyih was escorted with much bustle to his home, where his daughter waited in readiness to receive him. The joy with which they dwelt upon their happy meeting was equalled only by the regret with which they spoke of their long and distant separation. But to learn the sequel, and ascertain the singular conversation that passed between the president and his daughter, let us proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

"THE PARENTAL INJUNCTIONS BECOME TOO PRESSING TO BE ALTOGETHER RESISTED."

So excellent a youth, so chaste and fair
A maiden, each with rarest gifts endow'd—
A flower and a willow that had felt
The gentle influence—these might well be pair'd!
But rigid maxims govern'd each; they scorn'd
The weaker course—and breathing nought but virtue,
Sought for themselves an union of their own.

WHEN the president, on reaching home, found his daughter grown up into a graceful young woman, and more beautiful than ever, his joy and satisfaction were complete. "My sorrows," said he to her, "for all that you have suffered in consequence of my absence, and my happiness in being thus honoured and rewarded by the emperor, are as nothing in comparison with the consolation of my heart in finding you thus improved in looks, and unmolested in your peace. I may rejoice, too, in having secured for you a worthy husband, at the same time that I have chosen an excellent son-in-law for myself."

This unexpected intelligence recalled to Shueypingsin's recollection the story she had lately heard, and the young lady began to suspect her father must mean Teihchungyu. "Your years, sir," replied she, "now verge

verge on sixty; my mother no longer remains to you; and in default of sons, I myself am left as your only support. I grieve that, being a daughter, I cannot continue the family name; but need that prevent my constantly serving you? Why then wound my heart by mentioning marriage? With all my defects, I could ill bear to leave you and abandon my home."

"You must not use that argument," said her father, smiling; "you are very dutiful, but that is no reason why a young woman should give up marriage for the sake of remaining with her parents. Were this son-in-law an every-day sort of person, I should have mentioned the subject first to yourself. Of his youthfulness and spirit I say nothing,—of his talents and acquirements I say nothing,—of his generous resolution in the cause of right I say nothing: but his sagacity to discern merit,—his courage to defy danger,—his strength of character to undertake responsibility—and his eloquence to gain the cause he espoused, were enough to make me love and admire him. Hence my reasons for resolving at once that you should marry him."

Shueypingsin now fully understood from her father's speech to what person he alluded, and told him that there was no objection as regarded the individual, but an insuperable obstacle on the score of propriety. The president had already concluded the marriage contract, yet the ambiguous expressions he had before heard from Teihchungyu, who advised him to make inquiries on his

his return home, so exactly coincided with the objections his daughter now made, that he was very desirous to ascertain the truth, and therefore spoke out at once. —" Child," said he, " are you aware that the son-in-law whom I mean is Teihchungyu, eldest son of the Censor Teihying ?"

" Had it been any other person," replied Shueypingsin, " your daughter would have earnestly deprecated marriage : but if it be Teihchungyu, that becomes unnecessary—for the union cannot possibly take place. Supposing that I myself admitted it as possible, Teihchungyu would certainly be of a very contrary sentiment. The reason is this—there is an objection, founded on those rules of propriety which befit an honourable union. Though the annulment of the contract you have made will render fruitless your kind care in my behalf, it will save your daughter from doing that which she must repent hereafter."

The president was both surprised and alarmed. " Why," said he " Teihchungyu never sought to gain your heart by the midnight serenade; nor did you ever accompany him in flight through the morning dew.* What obstacle can you mean ?"

" I will inform you, sir," said Shueypingsin ; and with that she minutely recounted to her father the attempts of her unsuccessful admirer to obtain her,—

her

* Allusion to the story of Szemā and Wunkeun, lovers who eloped together. See notes to Appendix.

her uncle's underhand proceedings,—the stratagem by which she was carried before the magistrate—her rescue by Teihchungyu—his subsequent illness and danger—and the manner in which she conveyed him home and nursed him. "I am not ignorant," added she, "of the distance by which custom separates the sexes. Though the unusual manner in which we met with, and assisted each other, was justified by the occasion, and has bound us in mutual gratitude;—yet to think of marriage seems impossible. Under all circumstances, sir, are these not serious objections?"

The president's satisfaction was redoubled at this history of his daughter's conduct. "You have struggled with great hardships!" cried he. "I am surprised that Teihchungyu should have spoken so indistinctly on the late occasion. Child, the address with which you protected yourself from their attacks, only proves that you are a young woman of extraordinary merit, and increases my affection for you: while the courage with which Teihchungyu espoused and maintained the cause of justice, argues him to be a youth of equally rare excellence, and adds to the respect I already feel for him. Every thing considered, it is plain that, except yourself, there is no person fit to be his wife—and, except Teihchungyu, no person worthy to be your husband. You are an admirable pair, especially produced for each other by heaven. As for the trials which you encountered, they

they do you both the greatest credit; and instead of being an obstacle to your union, can only reflect additional lustre on it. Give yourself no farther anxiety about the subject, but depend upon my arranging every thing for the best."

> The daughter fear'd th' event her father most,
> Did hope—while various thus their hopes and fears,
> Their love and kind affection were the same!

We leave the father and daughter to debate the question of marriage, and turn to Kwoketsu. That young man, on the return of his emissary Chingkee, with the report that Shueykeuyih refused his consent, was seized with extreme vexation. When he afterwards found, however, that his father had presented a paper to the emperor, recommending the execution of his enemy, he was equally elated; —which elation was converted into a proportionate degree of sorrow and disappointment, when it subsequently appeared that, in consequence of Teihchung-yu's interference, the general had acquired honour, and occasioned the recall and promotion of Shueykeuyih.

But when at length it was reported to him, that the father of Shueypingsin had arranged the marriage contract with the father of his rival, he was ready to swoon with vexation, and sought for some relief to his bitterness from his friend Chingkee. "After I have exhausted every endeavour," said he, "in pursuit of Shueypingsin, this young brute all at once

once carries her off! When we endeavoured to inveigle him here, in order to wreak our vengeance upon him, it ended in ourselves being the sufferers—and when we informed against him, he still contrived to be beforehand with us, and to shame us all by a previous information. This, however, might have been endured, as we partly sought it at his hands—and I could even have borne to lose all prospect of obtaining Shueypingsin; but now, through my own instrumentality, he enjoys the most complete success, and is enabled quietly and composedly to arrange his union with Shueypingsin. If I die for it, I will yet serve him a turn!—My good friend, you must really supply me with a scheme."

"We could do nothing," replied Chingkee, "with this Shueypingsin while she was living by herself; and it will be very difficult to attempt any thing now, when her father is promoted so high, and returned to his home."

"But his promotion is nothing to me," said the other.

"It may be nothing to you," answered his friend, "but if you chuse to attack him, it will cost you so much more trouble."

Kwoketsu declared "that the trouble was no motive to deter him."

"Well, then," said the other, "we must not attempt to act openly; but contrive by some secret plots to break off the marriage."

"If I can only do that," exclaimed Kwoketsu, "I shall be most fully satisfied; but how is it to be effected?"

"It appears to me," replied his friend, "that the high rank and station of the president must render reputation and character of higher consequence to him. We need only, therefore, make up some scandalous tales connected with the residence of Teih-chungyu within his house, and spread them abroad, employing at the same time some person to convey them to his own ear; his fear of disgrace may perhaps induce him to break off the match: but if these reports should have no effect in changing his purpose, you might, as a desperate measure, engage some friend in the college of Censors to report the case to the emperor as a public scandal—which would effectually put an end to the marriage."

Kwoketsu was much pleased. "It is a very good scheme," said he, "and I will wait upon the two magistrates to-morrow, on purpose to set these rumours afloat."

"You must not do that," said Chingkee, "for both of the present magistrates are well acquainted with the truth; and will not only fail to credit you, but clear up the case for the other party. I understand, however, that both of them must soon leave us;—wait for their departure, and for the arrival of the new ones, who know none of the particulars. If you

go

go and vilify the parties to these, they will give you full credit; and their belief being obtained, will serve to support the allegations of any person you employ to accuse them to the emperor."

"Whence is it, my friend," said the delighted Kwoketsu, "that you possess such an inventive talent. You must surely be Koongming* himself restored to life."

"I do not wish to deceive you," said the other, —"and if you despise not my poor counsel, I have something better still in store."

"You must be mocking me," exclaimed the young man; "I cannot believe that possible."

—"Quite possible," replied his friend: "while last at Peking, I observed that my lord, your father, was extremely intimate with the nobleman Takwae. I learned also how Teihchungyu rescued the young woman, of whom that noble was enamoured, from confinement in his palace, andcaused his being condemned to solitary confinement for three years;—he must naturally detest the author of this. I likewise ascertained that the imprisoned Takwae had as yet no son, and that his wife was lately dead. You may, therefore, write to my lord, your father, and tell him to address Takwae, acquainting him with the extraordinary beauty of Shueypingsin, and of Teihchungyu being contracted to her. Takwae may be

 induced

* A famous politician of the period called "the Three States."

induced to stretch his power to get possession of her: —first, to obtain so handsome a woman; and secondly, to give vent to his hatred of Teihchungyu. He will doubtless gladly endeavour to obtain her; and should he succeed, it will save us all farther trouble. Is not this a good scheme?"

Kwoketsu expressed the most extravagant joy at the proposal.

—"To please you still more," continued his friend, "I have an additional plot to annoy him."

"As you are good enough to contrive it for me," said the other, "pray let me hear what it is."

"I learned, moreover," replied Chingkee, "during my stay at Peking, that the eunuch Chow was another friend of your father's. This person, it appears, has a niece who is excessively ugly, and withal still unmarried. Why not induce your father to point out Teihchungyu to the eunuch's notice?—this will be one way of revenging ourselves upon our enemy."

"It is the best scheme of all," exclaimed Kwoketsu, "and shall be the first adopted. There will be no difficulty in prevailing on my father to write; but I must likewise trouble you to undertake the journey."

"I cannot consider it as trouble where you are concerned, sir," replied the other.

'Tis

'Tis rarely that the worthy unoppos'd
May work their will, so num'rous are the plots
O' th' mean and base—Unmanageable thus
While human tempers, nought may mend the evil—
While men are such, all remedies must fail!

Let us now leave these two to carry their plots into execution. Teihchungyu continued his studies in the retirement of the West-hills until the period of the autumnal examination, when his talents enabled him, with the utmost ease * to take the degree of licentiate. In the following spring examination, he passed with equal ease to the grade of doctor; and on the ultimate examination in the emperor's palace, was placed in the second of the highest ranks of literature. He was immediately chosen to the office of *Shookeihsze* in the Hanlin college; and, in consideration of having previously declined the office of *Taechaou*, which had been offered to him for his merits in the case of the victorious general, he was now raised an additional step. His glory and happiness were at their full; and as he had completed the age of twenty-two years, his father was very urgent with him to celebrate his marriage: but whenever the name of Shueypingsin was mentioned, he only sighed, and made evasive excuses.—Still, however, would he seek another bride, there was none to suit him!

It

* Literally, "as easily as picking up straws."—Licentiate and Doctor were the terms adopted by the Jesuits to express the Chinese Keujin and Tsinsze.

It happened just then that the year's leave of absence granted to the president Shueykeuyih being expired, an express was despatched to call him back to court. The censor Teihying was aware of this, and took occasion to write him a letter, entreating that he would bring his daughter to the capital, as the shortest way to accomplish the union. The president was of the same opinion, and consulted his daughter.—"As I have to thank his majesty's favour," said he, "for recalling me to court, it is quite uncertain when I shall return hither again. At your age, it would be extremely wrong to leave you by yourself;—you shall accompany me to Peking, therefore, and relieve the solitude of my dwelling."

Shueypingsin entirely agreed with him.—"Of what use," asked she, "were your daughter, did she always remain at this distance from you? My most ardent wish is to accompany my father—but there is one point which I would gladly mention before-hand."

"Speak out," said the president, "whatever it may be."

"Why," replied his daughter, "should the subject of my proposed marriage with Teihchungyu be revived on our arrival, I would most urgently decline it."

"The president laughed very much at her scruples. "Child," said he, "your anxiety is superfluous at present—let us wait till we reach Peking, and then see

see what is to be done.—But who is to take charge of our household here in our absence?"

"My uncle," replied she, "may be your principal agent, while the steward and his wife can take charge of the details of our household."

He complied exactly with his daughter's advice; and their business being settled accordingly, they took their departure together for the capital.

> While yet in silence lay the father's wish,
> The daughter's heart did all anticipate—
> So, 'ere the spring arrives, its distant influence
> Draws forth the buds towards the sunny south!

In about a month afterwards, when the president had settled himself in his own mansion, and paid his respects at court, his official acquaintance all came to wait upon him; and when the censor Teihying had paid his visit, he sent his son to do the same. Now Teihchungyu, from personal regard for the president, which was heightened by that minister's near relationship to Shueypingsin, lost no time in attending to his father's directions; but in so doing, announced himself by the ordinary designation among friends, instead of using the term "son-in-law." The president was aware of Teihchungyu's promotion to the imperial college, and observing his spirited and elegant exterior, felt the highest satisfaction at the meeting. He received him in the warmest manner. "This young scholar," thought he to himself, "and my daughter, are an admirable match! But

But can it be possible that he is ignorant of the contract which his father has already made for him, that he omits to designate himself as my son-in-law? It would seem that he has the same scruples as my daughter; and when it comes to concluding the marriage, I fear we may have some trouble: and yet, my own choice being confirmed by that of the bridegroom's parents, there can be little doubt of the young people complying. Let us wait quietly—the thing will settle itself."

A little while after, a confidential dependant came to him in haste, on very private business. "My lord," said he, "I have a relation in the household of the noble Takwae, who informs me that his patron has lost his lady, and is yet without a son. Somebody, it seems, has written to inform him of the beauty and accomplishments of the young lady your daughter, and suggested his applying to the emperor to obtain her. That noble being willing to ascertain the truth, ordered my relation to make inquiries, and he, accordingly, knowing me to be in your lordship's office, came privately to ask me." On hearing this, the president desired to know what answer he had returned. "I told him," said the informant, "that my young lady had been long affianced to Teihchungyu, lately promoted to the imperial college. He next inquired if they had solemnized the marriage,—to which I replied in the negative. He then went

went away, and I considered it my duty to inform your lordship of the circumstance."

"Very well," said the president; "if he comes again, you must tell him that the marriage is on the point of being solemnized." The other promised to obey, and took his leave.

"This Takwae," thought the president to himself, "is a drunken libertine, who being condemned for his conduct towards that young woman to three years' solitary confinement, would rather repeat than repent his former deeds. Let him apply to the emperor;—I have already concluded the match, and need not fear him. But it will provoke discussion at least, and create enmity between us. I had better mention this to Teihying, and prevail on him to celebrate his son's marriage at once, to put an end to all disputes. There will be no difficulty in persuading *him*," added he,—"but I am afraid I shall have some trouble with my daughter."

With this, he went straight to Shueypingsin's chamber. "Child," said he, "I would not willingly force this marriage upon you; but the sooner it is concluded, the sooner will unpleasant discussions be prevented."

"What discussion need we fear," enquired his daughter, "even should it not be concluded?"

The president told her what he had just heard, and added, "if you do not solemnize your wedding at once,

once, and abstain from raising so many scruples, Takwae will presently find it out. His intimacy with the inmates of the palace is great, and if they concert a plot against us, we may find some difficulty in opposing them;—do not, then, be too tenacious."

"Your daughter," replied she, "has no wish to be tenacious, but only to act as propriety requires. Your informant just now said that somebody had addressed a letter to Takwae;—now perhaps, sir, you are not aware who the person is that advises that nobleman to seek to obtain me from the emperor?"

"How should I know?" said her father.

"Then I can tell you," continued Shueypingsin, —"it was the minister Kwoloongtung."

"But how come you to fix upon him?" enquired the president.

"I have long heard," said his daughter, "that Takwae is entirely devoted to intemperance and profligacy, and a very worthless character;—and knowing that the minister seconded the vicious projects of his son, I am convinced that he, too, is the same:—bad and bad naturally combine. Besides, your refusal of his application concerning myself, is *one* cause of enmity towards us; your recall and promotion, after he had proposed your death, is *another;* and the rage with which he must have heard of your giving me to Teihchungyu, is a *third.* He accordingly instigates Takwae

Takwae to persecute me. If not the minister, then who else should it be?"

"Your surmise," said her father, "is no doubt quite correct; and if he be thus mischievous, it behoves us to be the more guarded."

"It will be most fortunate for this Takwae," said the young lady, "if he abstains from molesting me: for should he credit what he hears, and really apply to the emperor, I shall have my remedy. You, sir, need only present a counter-address, and bring forward all his misdeeds to his shame."

—"Child," said her father, "that may be very true, but it is better to *solve* enmities, than to *contract* them; and I had much rather have the union concluded at once, and render his stratagems unavailing. This will be a better course than shaming him publicly."

The father and daughter were still debating the question, when it was announced that the Censor Teihying had sent a messenger, requesting to have some conversation with the President. The latter wished particularly to see the Censor, and on the receipt of his message, went at once without attendants to his house on horseback, in order to avoid notice. His host received and conducted him to a back room, whence the attendants being excluded, he took the President's hand, and said in a low tone of voice, "As I was leaving the Court this morning through the Eastern-gate, I came suddenly upon the eunuch

eunuch Chow who laid hold of me, and said he had a niece whom he would marry to my son. I told him plainly that my son was already contracted—he enquired to whom—and, as I feared his tricks, I was obliged to tell him at once it was to your daughter. "But," said he, "the marriage is not yet completed,* —the presents only have been sent, and you must not refuse me—let me send a person to negociate the new match!" Now I fear that he will be as unreasonable and insolent as the rest of his tribe, and make mischievous use of his influence within the palace. To enter into a contest of words with him would be quite useless; and as the marriage contract is already made between us, why not agree at once to complete the union, as the best means of preventing discussion."

"What," said the Censor, "are you in a scrape too?—I am in just such another myself;" and he recounted minutely what he had heard of Takwae's intentions from his informant.

"Well, if we are both of us in that situation," observed Teihying, "we should seize the occasion, and marry

* The power and insolence of these eunuchs of the palace during the dynasty called Ming (the time of the romance) is a part of history, and will be found very strongly depicted in the following pages. Though they did not *then* make and unmake emperors, as they did at an earlier period of the Chinese annals, the ruin of that family, and their expulsion by the Manchow Tartars, is attributed in some measure to the mischiefs which they secretly caused. It does credit to the policy of the reigning Tartar dynasty, that they have diminished the number, and effectually destroyed the influence, of this tribe.

marry the parties. Then these people will not only be disabled from molesting us, but admitting that the emperor's order is obtained, it can avail them nothing."

"There can be no doubt of the expediency of the measure," replied the president; "but my daughter is very tenacious, and constantly deprecates the union, from scruples respecting that previous acquaintance with your son. I fear she will not willingly leave my house."

"They are both of them equally anxious," said the president, "to do what is right:—my son too is constantly raising objections; what then is to be done?"

"It is my belief," said the Censor, "that with their uncommon beauty and sense, it is impossible but they love each other, and would willingly tie the silken knot. What makes them decline it, is the wish to avoid the scandal which might attach to their previous intercourse; and they avoid that scandal from a dread of disgracing the great cause of morality. These fears and scruples merely prove the uncommon worth and merits of either, and must be duly appreciated both by us and others. Could we live unmolested, and by degrees persuade them to complete the marriage, it would be very well; but this vexatious business of Takwae, and of the eunuch, rises up to annoy us in the very midst of our plans, and makes all temporizing impossible. Let us then endeavour to persuade either party to yield to the exigency of the case, and perfect this good work, as the best means of preventing discussions. Though they speak so strongly at present,

present, they will probably listen to counsel." Teihying agreed that this was perfectly reasonable, and in fact the only course to be adopted. They then separated.

Rare is the union of two fairest flowers
On the same stem—some cloud must ever dim
The moon's full brightness!—Tangled briar and thorn
Beset their path perplex'd; and free from blame
Must either be, 'ere they consent to wed,
—This matchless pair!

Teihying, immediately after the departure of his visitor, sent for his son home. After informing him of what had just passed, "This marriage," added he, "should really be no longer delayed on any account. You must not vex my heart by too firmly adhering to your former arguments."

"I should never presume, sir," replied the young man, "to oppose your commands; but the ancient sages, in matters that related to moral conduct, were consistent in the midst of every difficulty. Why should I do otherwise; or allow the contemptible sting of a wasp to disturb the even tenor of my innocent course? As to the eunuch, he acts merely at the instigation of the minister—what harm can he do?"

"You may be able to guide *yourself* clear of difficulties," said the Censor;—"still you should act with some consideration for Shueypingsin."

"If such be your plan, sir," replied his son, "we must advise the president to give out abroad that the marriage is really completed, in order to stop their farther

farther pursuit of us; while at home we still live apart, as a precaution against any future attack."

His father paused.—" If we give out that they are man and wife," thought he, " the externals of marriage will at least have been settled; and as for the rest, we may let them do as they please."

—" What you propose," added he to his son, " will equally suit both sides of the question; and I consent to your plan." He then immediately gave directions to chuse a fortunate time for the union; and on the following day received a note from the president to this effect.

" On my return home, I communicated to my daughter the subject of our conversation, thinking she must comply: but with the same rigidness of scruple, she desired still to avoid scandal, without any fear of the troubles that threaten. After repeated exhortations, she now agrees to the external ceremonies of marriage, from the necessity of the case, but at home desires to remain in her present state. I apprehend that if the marriage be once given out as celebrated, the union cannot ultimately be avoided. I have therefore listened to her, confident in the gradual accomplishment of our wishes. I know not if you will approve; but write purposely to beg your instructions. My card accompanies this."

Teihying read the note with much secret satisfaction. " Truly," thought he, "they are a pair destined by heaven for each other. With such a daughter-in-law, my threshhold may be pronounced happy: the great cause of virtue

virtue is illustrated by her example. But if my son brings her home, and they still live separate, it will give rise to remarks. Let him, therefore, go and espouse her at her own house; nobody can be acquainted with what passes there." He accordingly communicated this idea to the president in his reply.

The latter was better pleased than ever with a proposal which prevented his daughter leaving her home; and when they had chosen a fortunate day between them, the object being to let every body know, a great number of the chief persons at court were invited to partake of the nuptial feast. The day commenced with music, and all the bustle of preparation; and when evening* came on, the Censor, in his own official character, accompanied by his son as a member of the imperial college, both of them in their ceremonial habits, and seated in state sedans, proceeded to the President's house to solemnize the wedding.

The President met them at the door, and conducted them to the front hall, where the relatives and visitors were assembled: and the ceremonies of introduction being concluded, Teihchungyu was detained to partake of the entertainment: after which he was conducted towards the inner state-room to meet his bride. Night had already set in, and across the front of the apartment was suspended a semi-transparent curtain, through which shone the light of the lamps and tapers as brilliant as the day: while in the rooms on

* See vol. i. p. 251, for the hour of nuptials.

on either side were lodged the musicians, ready to strike up a peal from within. At the top of the room were prepared two tables for the nuptial fête: and below them, on the left and right, two crimson carpets were ready spread. A crowd of females surrounded Shueypingsin as she stood waiting on the right side; and upon Teihchungyu's approach to the screen, two of them quickly drew it aside, and invited him to go in.

Upon his entrance, Shueypingsin, far from displaying any of the childish bashfulness common to her age and sex, received him with a cheerful and attentive courtesy. "The services for which I have had to thank you, sir," said she, "are deeply engraven on my heart, and I can never sufficiently requite them. Contrary to our expectations, heaven seems to have an intent to compassionate us; and our parents have unconsciously seconded our wishes. I rejoice in this opportunity of expressing my gratitude: pray take the guest's place, and accept my service."

Teihchungyu had admired the uncommon beauty of his bride when he first met her at the magistrate's tribunal; but she was then habited in a plain and simple dress—and seeing her now set off with gold and gems, and attired like a goddess, he felt altogether overpowered as he exclaimed: "Lady, my thankfulness for your past bounty I have never ventured publicly to express, lest others should slander your

sweet name; but in my dreams and inmost thoughts I offered up to you the secret tribute of lasting gratitude. Being now so happy as to approach your divine presence, let me pay the fit tribute of respect."

They both repaired to the crimson carpets, and went through the prescribed form of four inclinations to the ground: while the attendants caused the musicians to play a low and solemn air. These ceremonies being concluded, the music ceased; and when the bride and bridegroom had taken their seats, tea was served up by the females in waiting.

As it was the nuptial feast, the distinctions of host and guest were waived, nor did either do the honours: but after a little conversation, the wine was served up, and they drank the three cups together. Teihchungyu then said: "Lady, your kindness in rescuing my life, from the pitfall which was laid for it, I have long since had occasion to acknowledge, and therefore will not again comment upon:—but while wandering with unsettled purpose, had it not been for your excellent advice, I know not where I might have been at this day. It does not befit me to boast of my recent promotion, save to thank you for the share that your goodness had in it. These are obligations which I can never dismiss from my heart."

"Who is there," said Shueypingsin, "but is capable of offering advice—a child can shew the way to him who asks—but to follow and attend to it is the difficulty.

difficulty. That you adopted it, sir, was entirely your own merit; and can reflect no credit on myself. To speak of the great deeds by which you have benefited me—the rescue at the magistrate's was comparatively easy—but the case of the general, before the Triple court, and so nearly affecting the emperor himself, was certainly no trifle! And yet you undertook it as an ordinary measure: and in performing an act of more than human generosity, were able by your eloquence to move both the emperor and his servants, and to convert disgrace into merit. Thus were my father's life and dignities restored! No services could exceed these; and though I sacrificed my life, I could not recompense a ten-thousandth part. What then induced me to evade the proposition of becoming your wife? It was this—the calumny that had attached to our former acquaintance. Though both of us were conscious of innocence, there were many who wronged us:—even now, there are those who envy, who hate, and who calumniate us. How, then, could we be secure from the taint of scandal? Had we listened to our fathers' propositions, and sought at once the nuptial union, we should have been victims to this, without a remedy. Rather let us wait until the floating clouds have dispersed, and conclude our marriage under a clear sky and broad day: thus my own poor fate will not injure nor involve your higher destinies.—I know not if you approve my sentiments."

Teihchungyu bowed his head in concurrence.—"Though," said he, "I look forward to the completion of our union more anxiously than rain is desired in the midst of drought, though it is the constant object of my highest hopes, and though with the concurrent desire of our parents, I cannot but wish to complete my own happiness, I have hesitated,—from the fear lest an indiscreet indulgence of my own wishes might entail after-regret upon yourself. When asked for the reason of my scruples, I found it difficult to answer; but as your own opinions so perfectly accord with mine, let us abide by our mutual resolution: and if the event turn out happy, we may regard it as the consequence of this day's resolution."

"We act under restraint," replied Shueypingsin,—"but it is the only way to frustrate the schemes of our enemies without trouble."

"It is my belief," said Teihchungyu, "that as Takwae and the eunuch are perfect strangers, this impish scheme is the contrivance of the minister and his son, who have made them dupes. Their contrivances will fail on this occasion; but the evil disposition of our enemies must still remain, and I know not what plan they may try next."

"What is unaccomplished," said the young lady, "may be frustrated: what remains to the future may be prevented—but our espousal of to-day is already accomplished—it can neither be frustrated nor prevented;

vented; and they have nothing left but to scatter reports, and misinterpret our actions, in order to interrupt our happiness. My reason for recommending at present only the external forms of our marriage, is, that every one may hereafter be convinced we have always been innocent; our slanderers will then be confounded."

"Lady, you advise well," replied Teihchungyu; "it is the best means of repelling such wicked calumniators; and proves your good sense and your virtue to be equally perfect. But, as regards the occasion on which you restored me to health, and when we lived together under the same roof, our innocence could be truly known to none but heaven, earth, yourself, and me.* Beyond these four, who shall bear witness in our favour? When our slanderers begin their attacks, those who know us will esteem us as we deserve; but where shall others find the evidence to acquit us; and our ultimate union being thus prevented, what is the remedy?"

"We need not be anxious as to that," said Shueypingsin:—"I have heard that what heaven has begun, heaven will invariably accomplish; and that such impediments as these are nothing but trials of virtue. The good man perseveres—the base one succumbs; and this is the difference between them. Your loftiness of principle, and firmness of temper, unchanged and

* "Only four knew it"—a phrase.

and unmoved by rank and power, if not the gift of heaven, could not be what they are. For myself, I am but a simple maiden, and yet I have some small sense of what is right. Had we not been intended for each other, we should, instead of meeting as we did, have remained apart like the sun and moon in the east and west—we should have harmonized no better than things which are most unsuited to each other. But you came across me in the highway, and nobly compassionated my danger; while I, in return, disregarded calumny to requite you. Heaven's intention respecting us may partly be gathered from what is past. Although, however, your residence in my house was for the best purpose, it exposed us to reproach, and compelled us to practise the greater reserve: and now that we have our parents' consent, and the regular intervention of friends, though the match be unexceptionable in itself, our private scruples still remain. We do not complete the union, which is quite in our power, from a regard to our good name; and such a course is in strict accordance with the will of heaven, which, did it fail to second us by accomplishing our ultimate union, in vain would have produced and brought us together! But heaven's intentions are altogether mysterious, and beyond the reach of our shallow conjectures. Await them in tranquillity: if it surveys our actions, it will certainly clear up these doubts: and, admitting that it should not,

not, we may at least remain as we are, with the name of marriage, and the reality of friendship and esteem. We may yet enjoy life in each other's society, and perhaps afford the subject of a tale hereafter."

His brow expanded with delight, as 'Teihchungyu listened to her words. "Your excellent discourse," said he, "has removed the weeds that choked my understanding! I shall evermore seek to do what is best, and patiently await the will of heaven without needless anxiety or doubt."

Thus they continued their mutual converse; discoursing first of Kwoketsu's wicked schemes, which induced their acquaintance and friendship; and then of his father the minister's envenomed disposition, which led to the discovery of the leader's merits.

> In form united, what was there to bar
> Their perfect union?—wedded or unwed,
> All tranquil was their course, and none but such
> As estimate their motives rightly, know
> The wisdom of th' inspir'd of old!

But to learn the sequel; to see this pair again hampered in toils, which lead to a repetition of the marriage ceremonies; the reader must look to the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

"IN SPITE OF THE TRAP TO ENSNARE HIM, THE HERO DOES NOT YIELD."

With painted face and pencill'd brows, she strove
To be the fair she was not; with her fate,
No silken thread was twin'd; she ne'er invok'd
The old inhabitant o' th' moon, but sought
By stratagem t' effect what he denied:
—No mate th' enamell'd bird of brightest hue
For twittering swallows!—The unshaken scorn
Of her repulse did blight with dire disgrace
The vernal promise of the bridal.

ALTHOUGH the marriage of Teihchungyu and Shueypingsin was confined as yet to its external forms, their esteem and attachment for each other exceeded those of ordinary couples. They remained in the same house for three days without once stirring abroad, a circumstance which gave great satisfaction to both the President and the Censor.

We leave them, and turn to Takwae and the eunuch, who at the minister's instigation had been very desirous, the former to obtain Shueypingsin in marriage, the latter to give his niece to Teihchungyu. They had made use of all their power and influence with that view, and every preliminary was already carefully arranged,—when to their utter astonishment and dismay they heard that the young couple were already united!

Deeming

Deeming their cause was hopeless, they sent a messenger to acquaint the minister.

He heard it with a resolution to prosecute his vengeance. "Did I humble myself," thought he darkly to himself, "to send intreaties and presents to Shueykeuyih in his distant exile, for no other purpose but to meet with a rebuff? Did I go the length of advising the emperor to punish him, with no other effect than to enhance his deserts? How is my revenge to be satisfied, or my enmity appeased? I made use of Takwae and the eunuch, with the hopes of annoying them—and they proceed with the utmost ease and quiet to conclude their union! This move in the game has proved a failure: what then shall I next attempt?"

He despatched several confidential domestics in secret, to pick up whatever they could learn, near the houses of the President and the Censor. One messenger came back and informed him that the bridegroom, instead of carrying the young lady to his own residence, had espoused her at her father's:—another reported, that though the young people had gone through the forms of marriage, they still inhabited different chambers;—a third announced, that they evinced the greatest fondness for each other, and had not moved out for three successive days. The minister was much puzzled at this intelligence. "What," thought he to himself,—"if their marriage was concluded, what prevented the bride being carried to her husband's house, or what should make him espouse her at her own home? If they are married, why

why have they separate chambers?—and if they live thus separate, how shall I explain their mutual fondness?—I do not understand it! Possibly it is a concerted scheme to avoid the proposals of Takwae and the eunuch. Well, let them try their scheme; but if they still live separate, their ultimate union may be prevented. Were I now, however, to urge Takwae to pursue Shueypingsin, it would be a waste of labour;—she is too secure in her privacy. But Teihchungyu's office requires his daily attendance at court; and I need only prevail on the eunuch to inveigle him by some contrivance into his house, and there force him to perfect the proposed union with his niece: it will be sufficient to set aside their present incomplete espousal."*

With this resolution, the minister proceeded in person to visit the eunuch, and proposed his plot. The latter very readily assented. "It is a mere trifle," said he; "were the object to take away his life, there would be many difficulties; but this plan of giving him my niece in marriage is a most laudable scheme, and I care not if his majesty knows it to-morrow. Set your mind at rest; it more than half pertains to myself, and I will take my measures very securely. But when the time arrives, I must beg you to be present, and act the part of a witness to the marriage, in order that he may have nothing to say."

The

* This, among many others, is a proof that no Chinese can have more than one *wife*, properly so called.

The minister willingly agreed to this, and perceiving the eunuch's zeal on the occasion, returned with much delight to his home, where he waited quietly for farther news.

> Expect them not so readily t' abandon
> Plots of such hopeful promise—scheme on scheme
> Succeeds in rapid train—but when all's done,
> Who knows but they shall rue their barren toil!

Teihchungyu had obtained ten days leave of absence on the occasion of his marriage, and the period being now expired, he prepared to resume his duties at court. Shueypingsin, with her usual penetration and foresight, cautioned him thus. "Although we have disconcerted with great ease and quiet the schemes of the minister, in conjunction with his two agents, I apprehend their plots are not yet exhausted. Now it appears to me that Takwae, notwithstanding his bad character, is still an officer of the court, and kept in check by the dread of disgrace, from attempting any thing very outrageous: on my own part, therefore, I need not fear *him*. But the eunuch is attached to the emperor's person, and like his fellows, totally ignorant and careless of what propriety demands. I apprehend that he may still prove mischievous, and advise you by all means to be on your guard while attending the court."

"Your clear foresight and providence," replied Teihchungyu, "lay open the inmost thoughts of those villainous people; but I regard the whole tribe of eunuchs as contemptible vermin, quite unworthy of my fears."

"There

" There is a sufficient reason, however, for fearing them," said she,—" their nearness to the emperor's person: you must not treat them too lightly." He nodded in token of assent, and promising to remember her good counsel, proceeded with the rest to the imperial audience.

The court being dissolved, he was returning by the way of the eastern gate, when the eunuch himself appeared, as though meeting him by a lucky chance. They exchanged the ordinary civilities, and Teihchungyu would have taken leave, but the other seized him by the arm. " I have met you, sir," said he," most fortunately —and was just on the point of sending to your house."

" We are both of us equally servants of his majesty," replied Teihchungyu; " but you are *within* the palace, and I *without*:* I therefore am at a loss to know what is your business with me."

" In any private matter of my own," said the eunuch, " I should not venture to trouble you; but it is an order from his majesty, and I presume you cannot decline it."

With that he urged Teihchungyu to proceed with him on horseback; but the latter observed, " If there be an order from his majesty, let me beg you, sir, to acquaint me with the same, and I will obey it."

" You are over suspicious!" said the eunuch:—" could I possibly venture to forge or falsify such an order? But

* By the regulations of the court, styled Hoeytëen, they are always kept jealously apart.

But I will tell you the truth at once. The emperor has two drawings, of which he is much enamoured, and understanding that you are an elegant poet, he wishes you to inscribe a few verses on each."

"Where are the drawings?" inquired the young man.

"They are in my house," replied the other, "and I therefore beg you will go with me, and write the verses, that I may present them to his majesty."

Teihchungyu had been placed fully on his guard by Shueypingsin's counsel; yet the reiteration by the eunuch of the emperor's order, left him no liberty to chuse; so he mounted his horse and proceeded at once with his conductor. The latter ushered him into his residence, and tea having been presented, the order was given to serve up a repast:—but here Teihchungyu interfered. "The imperial command," said he, "is to compose verses for the drawings,—let me beg you to produce them, in order that I may obey. As for your hospitality, I really cannot venture to trouble you."

"We eunuchs, sir," replied the other, "are quite ignorant of letters, but nevertheless view scholars of a high stamp like yourself with the utmost respect; we are very glad of an opportunity to cultivate your acquaintance over a cup of wine. Had I invited you without a reason, you would never have come; but the emperor's order has given me a happy occasion of enjoying your company, and it is but fair you should spend

spend part of the day here:—nay, sir, you must not altogether despise us."

"Our functions," replied Teihchungyu, "are very distinct, but we are both of us servants of his majesty. I should hardly, therefore, think of treating you so lightly:—but there is still the imperial command, and admitting that I accept your hospitality, I ought first to attend to my duty."

"You must not think to take me in so," said the eunuch laughing—"you want to finish your task, and then make your escape. However, I will arrange it thus:—there are two of the drawings, and you shall begin by writing the verses on one of the flower-pieces; we will then take some wine together, after which you shall compose the verses for the other. We shall thus be both accommodated."

Teihchungyu was obliged to comply, and the other led him into a back room, where a boy in attendance was ordered to lay a writing-table with ink, paper, pencils, and ink slab:* while the host himself going up stairs, returned holding up reverently in both hands one of the drawings rolled up. It was placed on the table, and the attendants ordered to open it out for Teihchungyu's inspection.

He perceived it to be a drawing, by some first-rate artist,

* "The four precious implements of the study," according to the original phrase. It is pretty generally known that they write with a fine hair brush, dipped into Chinese (miscalled Indian) ink, which is rubbed with a little water upon a small slab of black schistose stone.

artist, of the bell-mouthed flower Calycanthus, extremely rich and elaborate, and truly worthy of its imperial destination.

With all the care that such a task demanded, Teih-chungyu rubbed the ink and prepared his pencil, and having extemporaneously composed a stanza of eight heptameter* verses, inscribed it by the side of the flower which it celebrated.

He had no sooner finished his undertaking, than the minister Kwoloongtung was announced. The eunuch instantly desired he might be requested to enter. "My lord," said he to him, "you come most opportunely: I have received his majesty's order to request this gentleman to inscribe a couple of flower pieces with some poetry. I of course thought that such a task would require at least half the day, and accordingly prepared a poor repast to detain him: but to my surprise, his extraordinary talent has enabled him to write the verses off at once. I cannot read them myself, and will trouble you to let me hear them:—I shall thus be the better prepared to present them to the emperor."

"Very willingly," said the minister, and walking straight up to the table, he read out the verses, which were to this effect.

On

* Tseih yen leu "of seven words or feet." Chinese verses are measured by the number of words, which therefore answer to feet in other languages.—See Treatise or Chinese Poetry—Part I.

*On the Calycanthus.**

Clad in its paly vest of waxen hue
Bends the fair flow'r—no spendthrift of its sweets:
—That pendent cup, rich storehouse of perfume,
Doth only half unfold its tender petals:
'Tis like some timid tale of sorrow, half
Untold—low drooping on its slender stem,
The maiden blossom hangs its bashful head!
No chill winds check its bloom—the flow'ret guards
Those vernal hues to vie with brightest buds
Of the prolific south!

The minister himself was the first to express his approbation. "Every word," cried he, "is descriptive of the flower!—these lines are a credit to our imperial college."

The eunuch seemed pleased to hear this. "Doubtless," said he, "if your lordship praises them, they must be good;" and he forthwith commanded the attendants to replace the drawing, and serve up the entertainment.

"But," said Teihchungyu, "there is another drawing to be inscribed, why not let me finish that at once? —I shall thus feel more at my ease in accepting your hospitality."

"I perceive the great facility," replied the eunuch, "with which your talents enable you to compose these pieces, and must therefore beg you will take a glass, if it were merely to stimulate your genius.†" So saying, he ushered his guests to the table.

The

* Orig. *Lă mei* "waxen mei-flower."

† Literally, "to moisten your pencil."

The usages of the imperial college required the relative ranks of its members to be strictly observed; the minister, therefore, occupied the first place, Teih-chungyu the second, while the eunuch himself took the third. They had drank some rounds together, when the latter began the discourse. "His majesty," said he, "has been long acquainted with the heroic qualities of our friend here; but was less certain of his literary attainments, and therefore required him to inscribe these drawings. Now, as I had in view an excellent proposal myself in connexion with him, I took occasion to mention the subject to the emperor; and heaven seems to afford me to-day an opportunity of obtaining my wishes."

The minister, pretending entire ignorance, begged to inquire what this proposal might be?

"The drum that is not beat," replied the eunuch, "will not sound.—The bell that is not struck, will not ring. I had better speak out at once what I mean. It is my lot to have a niece of sufficient personal attractions, superadded to great virtue and modesty; she is just eighteen this year, and we have never been able to find a fit match for her. On discovering the youthful merits of our friend here, and learning that he was still single, I immediately fixed upon him in my own mind; and meeting with his respected father the Censor, in returning from audience the other day, I acquainted him with my wish—

He gave his consent;* and I yesterday acquainted the emperor, and prayed his majesty to appoint a negociator of the match. His majesty, in commanding me to get the verses composed on these drawings, observed that *mei*, the name of the flower, was the same as *mei*, a marriage agent;—that the inscription of the verses was a sufficient conclusion of the match; and that any farther signification of his pleasure became superfluous, since this hint must suffice for a person of letters. One of the drawings is finished; and you perhaps comprehend me now, sir?" said he to Teihchungyu.

The young man was aware of his drift, but replied, nevertheless, with perfect composure: "Your kind intentions, sir, it does not befit me to reject: but the unlucky destiny of your poor scholar has already allied him to the family of the President, Shueykeu-yih:—it is impossible for me to contract another engagement."

"Do not try to deceive me in that way," said the eunuch, laughing, "for I am in full possession of the truth. The farce which was enacted the other day was just to prevent the union of Shueypingsin with Takwae—so they got you to play a part on the occasion;

* Rather a daring assertion. The whole story is false, and truly characterises the impudence of these creatures during the period of history to which this romance refers. The wretched pun is designed to expose the eunuch's ignorance;—though the words have the same sound, they are perfectly different.

casion;—why attempt to deceive me with such a pretence?"

"That is a strange way of talking!" observed Teihchungyu, "for deceit may be used on any other occasion but that of marriage, which is the first of the human relations, and the foundation of all morals;—why then talk about playing a part? You will scarcely assert, that after the performance of all the prescribed marriage ceremonies, a man may take *another* wife,* or the woman espouse *another* husband?"

"Yes," rejoined the other, "they may, if they have not cohabited. What prevented your taking the bride home, when you had both a father and mother living—but you must needs espouse her at her own house? And if the ceremonies of marriage were performed, what should induce you to sleep in separate apartments?"

"The reason for not carrying my wife home,"† replied Teihchungyu, "was my father-in-law having no son, and the wish to delay the parting between the father and daughter. As to the rest, sir, it is of too domestic a nature for you to be acquainted with; and in your high station, and with your knowledge, you ought not to listen to such uncertain reports."

"I do not care," replied the other, "whether it be

* Here is abundant proof of what is advanced in the Preface; and many other passages throughout the work lead to the same conclusion.

† See vol. i. p. 232, Note.

true or false. I have addressed his majesty, and my niece is to be your wife—you cannot evade it."

"There is no evasion in the case," said Teih-chungyu; "but from the remotest age there never was an instance of a person in my situation,—whose business it is to study and determine the rules of propriety and morals,—marrying one wife, and then taking another."

"I wish to give you only one wife," replied the other:—"who wants you to have two?"

"I repeat," said Teihchungyu, "that my previous marriage compels me to reject this;—I should not decline your offer unless engaged."

"You must not make such distinctions in the present case," replied the eunuch;—"were you regularly married, you might plead priority as an excuse, but your wild and irregular connexion, though it may have priority of date, must nevertheless be considered as secondary."

"Were it a wild and irregular connexion," replied Teihchungyu, "I should not debate the question of priority, for such a connexion could not enter at all into the calculation; but when the contracting parties are of the highest rank—when the parents' commands are obeyed—the proposals regularly accepted—and all the prescribed rites observed, why call it a wild and irregular connexion? Your remark is offensive, sir."

"Allowing

" Allowing that the parents' commands are to be obeyed," cried the other,—" you will hardly say that his majesty's commands are *not* to be obeyed? Perhaps you want to make them equal to the emperor himself!"

Perceiving that the eunuch tried to entangle him in his speech, Teihchungyu observed ; " The important rites of marriage are of national consequence, and not a subject for our private discussion. Though we may not lightly address his majesty, let us request some members of the tribunal of Rites to consider the case, and determine which of us is correct."

" If you chuse to debate the point," said the other, " where is the need of referring it abroad? Do we want a judge of what the rites demand, here is the minister present, one of the chief members of the imperial college. You will hardly deny his learning and qualifications,—a word from him will be sufficient."

" True," observed Teihchungyu,—" the ceremonial rites are nearly allied to letters, and we may request his lordship's opinion."

" My lord," said the eunuch to the minister, " you have heard the whole of my dispute with this gentleman. We beg you to make a fair decision between us—you must not shew any partiality to a fellow member of the imperial college."

" Gentlemen," replied he, " without your reference I should not have ventured to intrude my opinion. Since you

you have condescended to ask me, I shall hardly presume to shew any partiality. As regards the rites of marriage, there are both ordinary and extraordinary rites, with the consequences resulting from them; and though we consulted the whole wisdom of the Court, they might labour day and night, and still not define these with certainty. If you ask my poor opinion, I have always understood that the sovereign himself is the author and origin of every rite. Now his majesty having issued his command on this occasion, there is no rite that can supersede it. To oppose this by quoting either the past or the present, is not merely a violation of all rites, but a failure in duty to the emperor."

The eunuch burst into a loud laugh. "Well said!" cried he; "there is a pretty decisive sentence—*that* settles the point—our friend here can say nothing to *that!*" He ordered an attendant to fill up a brimming cup, and walking round to where the minister sat, presented it to him with a profound inclination. "My lord, may I ask you to conclude the nuptial engagement in my behalf, and bring about this excellent union."

The other took the wine, and handed back the eunuch to his seat. "His majesty having given his sanction," said he, "I must receive your instructions as though they came from the emperor." Then drinking off the wine, he turned to Teihchungyu.—"His majesty's command

mand is issued for this marriage, and I apprehend, sir, that you can no longer contest the point, even though you had sworn an oath with the President to espouse his daughter. Submit then with a good grace, and let us all be merry together."

Teihchungyu felt quite disposed to give vent to his fury at such treatment as this—but he considered within himself, that in the first place, he must utter nothing disrespectful towards the emperor's order: secondly, this eunuch was a domestic officer of the palace, and must not be treated with violence: and lastly, situated as he now was in the interior of the house, he must seek some favourable occasion to leave it in company with the minister,—whereas he might frighten him away by proceeding at once to extremities.

—"Though I feel myself obliged," said he, "to obey his majesty's command, I must at least return home to acquaint my father and mother, select a fortunate day, and send the presents. I cannot accept your proposal on my sole authority."

"This comes of reading too many books!" said the eunuch. "Sir, there is no occasion for such pedantic scruples; for if you can view the emperor's command so lightly, you can do any thing you please on your own authority. If the imperial order is to be obeyed, let it be obeyed at once, without quoting these old saws, which have so little to do with it. This very day happens to be one of the most fortunate points in the Ecliptic,

Ecliptic,* the feast is prepared, the musicians in waiting, and his lordship here is the distinguised bridesman. The apartments within are ready adorned ; then conclude the nuptials at once, and bring this important business to a close. If you are afraid your father will take it amiss that you did not acquaint him, you have only to quote the emperor's command. As for the bride's portion, I will take care myself that it is ample."

The minister now put in a word. " Your intentions, sir, are very liberal, and if our friend here refuses to comply, it will be a bad return for so much kindness."

" The obligations of propriety precede those of gratitude," replied Teihchungyu.—" My purpose in coming hither to-day was not marriage, but to obey the emperor's order, and compose verses on those two drawings. There is but one of them finished, and it is impossible for me to discuss any private business until both are completed—I beg therefore that the other drawing may be produced. When I have performed my duty to his majesty, there will be quite time enough for other matters."

" That is all very well," said the eunuch, " but the next drawing is large, and not so conveniently brought down—better go up-stairs, and compose the verses there."

Teihchungyu

* *Hwangtaou,* ' The yellow path,' is the Ecliptic in Chinese astronomy : and they describe it as crossing the Equinoctial, on the armillary sphere, in the manner of two rings applied to each other at an inclination, and having a common centre. For this they had to thank their Arabian and European instructors.

Teihchungyu did not suspect the trick that was to be played him, and therefore replied, that above or below was the same thing, and he would do whichever was most convenient. " When you have taken another cup of wine," added his host, " I will beg you to go upstairs, and finish the second copy of verses."

Teihchungyu hoped that when the business of the drawings was completed, he should be able to find out a way to make his escape: he therefore rose from table, saying, " Our business is pressing, I will take no more wine."

The eunuch rose too, and raising his joined hands, begged his guest to proceed. Teihchungyu, seeing the minister rise up, proposed that he should accompany them; and the latter was moving in that direction, when he received a wink from the eunuch, which stopped him. " This is a duty especially imposed by the emperor on yourself alone, sir," said he to Teihchungyu: —" I had better wait here until your task is finished, and conclude our business on your return." Teihchungyu apologized for leaving him thus alone, and proceeded up-stairs, followed by the eunuch.

The fish should shun the scented bait*—the fowl
Avoid the twanging bow; but common peril
Could ne'er dismay our hero! Lo, the bird,
Whose flight excursive could th' horizon scan,
Is prisoner by a chirping swallow made!

Scarcely

* The translator was at a loss to account for the meaning of the expression 'scented bait,' so common in Chinese, and was surprised to meet with a complete explanation in a quarter where he certainly did not

Scarcely had he stepped into the chamber above, when the eunuch, who was behind him, stole suddenly down stairs, and a couple of attendants instantly closed the doors. Teihchungyu, on looking round, perceived the whole apartment to be decked out in all the variegated splendour of a nuptial chamber. In the middle was placed an embroidered screen, before which there sat a female gaily adorned.

> In pearls and gold all gorgeously attir'd,
> No arts could deck her native ugliness!
> The demon king might view her as his own:
> —She carried terror to a bridegroom's eye!

At first sight of Teihchungyu, the lady rose, and desired her maids to usher him in. He would readily have made his escape, but the doors being fast closed in the rear, he walked up and saluted her with a low inclination;—which done, he turned round, and stood still with his face in another direction. The lady said not a word, but an elderly attendant took up the discourse in her stead. "Sir, we presume you come here to your nuptials; but why this distant behaviour towards your bride;—you are invited to take your seat beside our lady."

"I came

not search for it. "The predilection of many species of fish for all strongly odorous substances is well known to every one who has observed the habits of this class of animals, and is often made subservient to the objects of the angler."—*Philos. Trans.* for 1827, p. 136. The paper, which contains the above observation, explains on this ground the use of a sub-maxillary odoriferous gland, found in the genus *crocodilus*, which devours fish, and which is thus curiously provided by nature with a means of attracting its prey towards its jaws.

"I came," said Teihchungyu, "by the emperor's order, to write verses on some drawings—who pretends that I came to my nuptials?"

"The two drawings," replied the old woman, "are in the room below—what should prevent your obeying the emperor's command, and inscribing them there? This is our lady's sleeping chamber—how could a mere stranger have been permitted to come thus far?"

"Your master has doubtless displayed an admirable turn for stratagem," said Teihchungyu;—"but it is unfortunate he should have chosen me as the subject, for I shall hardly serve his turn."

"Sir," replied the attendant, "you had better acquiesce with a good grace. What is the use of talking in that style?"

"You have contrived to get me into this place," said Teihchungyu; "but I was brought here under the pretext of the emperor's order to inscribe those drawings. This deceit has been practised in open day, and the minister below has witnessed it—you will hardly succeed with me. Perhaps you think I am to lose my senses to this beautiful creature here; but my temper and disposition answer to my name;* I am at least three parts more immoveable than Lewheahoey or Kwonyunchāng. What is the use, then, of this charming bait to entrap me?"

Now

* That is, 'Iron.'

Now the lady's modesty happened to be much on a par with her beauty;—she had put on a little show of reserve, and held her peace at his first entrance. Perceiving by her stolen glances his extreme youth and comeliness, which assimilated him rather to one of the other sex, she became quite in love with our hero. His last sneer, however, enraged her beyond endurance. "What unmannerly insolence is this!" cried she; "my uncle's station in the palace entitles me to be treated with some respect. The application to the emperor concerning you was intended as a favour; what do you mean, then, by saying that we entrap you, or by boasting that we shall not succeed? As you talk in that style, however, we will use a little of the freedom that belongs to the inmates of the palace, and shew you whether we will succeed or not:" so saying, she commanded her women to drag him before her.

They instantly obeyed, and crowded up to him in a body.—"Do you hear our lady, sir?—you had better comply at once, and prevent our using violence."

Teihchungyu scarcely knew whether to be angry or to laugh at this strange scene. However, he said not a word,—and the women, provoked at his silence, and urged by their mistress's anger, threw themselves upon him; one trying to push, and another to drag him—making at the same time a loud outcry. Teihchungyu could readily have shaken them off; but considering that they were a parcel of women, and fearful

of

of furnishing them with any pretext of complaint, he determined to be quiet. "There is a proverb," thought he to himself, "which says, 'The fairies of the hill* are no match for the cautious old priest.' I will not mind these creatures."—He then took a chair, and seated himself at the other end of the room, without paying any regard to the women's clamour.

When force hath reach'd its limit, it becomes
Weakness extreme—the firmness that retires,
Yet yields not, is of all the most enduring:
Seek ye an emblem of this quality?
The wat'ry element is fittest found.

While they were still surrounding him, the eunuch suddenly issued from a back room. He commanded the women to retire, asking them how they durst behave with such rudeness to a person of rank. Then turning to Teihchungyu, "Sir," said he, "the marriage has proceeded so far, that I do not perceive how you can decline it—better comply at once, and prevent our falling out."

"It is not I who decline it," replied Teihchungyu, —"but the ritual forbids such a connexion."

"How so?" inquired the other.

"Are you not aware," replied Teihchungyu, "that there is a regulation of the court, which prohibits all intercourse between officers of government, and eunuchs

* These are said to delight in frustrating the attempts made by the devotees of Fo, or Buddha, to reach a superhuman state; and whenever the latter chance to waver the least in their faith or practice, the malicious spirits acquire a dominion over them.

nuchs of the palace? If ordinary intercourse be forbidden, how can such an alliance be permitted?"

"That is an antiquated rule," said the other;—"would you have it take place of an immediate order from the emperor?"

"In obeying the imperial order," replied Teihchungyu, "it is first necessary to acknowledge it, and return thanks; but I have seen no authority for such an order, nor have I gone through the prescribed forms in return: to hurry over the marriage in this style is quite impossible—you must give the subject a due consideration, sir."

They were thus contesting the point in the room above, when a couple of inferior eunuchs came running in with all speed, and called away their master down stairs. The fact was, that the victorious general from the border had brought with him to Peking a great number of prisoners, together with a large quantity of valuable tribute; and the emperor, in receiving him at court, had decreed him a banquet in the imperial presence. Teihchungyu being the occasion of the leader's re-appointment and success, his majesty commanded that he should partake of the entertainment, and the attendant officers hastened to his residence to summon him. On hearing that he had accompanied the eunuch home, they hurried to the house of the latter, where they found his horse and attendants waiting at the gate. They immediately

diately sent in a message to the eunuch; and when he answered their summons, and heard what they had to say, his disappointment and rage deprived him of utterance! He stared at the minister, and the minister stared at him, without saying a word;—while the state messengers urged that their business was pressing.

There was no remedy—and the eunuch ordered the doors to be thrown open. Teihchungyu came down without knowing the reason; but on hearing the message, and perceiving the urgency of those who delivered it, he prepared to take his departure. The disappointed eunuch now gave vent to his malice. "The emperor's command requires you to attend the banquet," said he—"but it requires you no less to inscribe the two drawings. You have inscribed only one of them; and when his majesty expresses his anger to-morrow, do not plead that I gave you no timely notice."

"I urged you long ago to let me finish the verses," said Teihchungyu, "but you kept the drawing out of my reach—how was I to inscribe it?"

The said drawing had been all the while in the lower room, but purposely concealed, with a view to entice Teihchungyu up-stairs. Once up-stairs, however, it had been carefully displayed upon the table below, with a view to get him into a scrape. The eunuch now pointed it out with his finger. "There

is

is the drawing on the writing table. If you screen your disobedience to his majesty under the pretence that the drawing was concealed, his lordship the minister is luckily present to witness the contrary."

Teihchungyu walked up to the table without making a reply, and opening out the drawing, perceived that it was a blush-coloured Plum-blossom, different altogether from the preceding flower piece. He again rubbed the ink and prepared his pencil, which the state messengers perceiving, urgently pressed his immediate departure, saying that the verses would require time, and they feared being too late for the banquet.

"There is no hurry,"—replied Teihchungyu, and so saying, he wrote off the verses in a flowing hand; then placing down the pencil, he bade a slight adieu to the minister, and walked out at once;—the eunuch being obliged to attend him to the gate, and see him on horseback.

Alone and dauntless did he walk, secure
In native courage—proud in matchless talent:
In him the first of heroes was revived—
The first of bards in him did re-appear!

On his return into the house, the eunuch requested his friend to read out to him the last copy of verses. They were to this effect.

"*On a blush-coloured Plum-blossom.*"
See in itself one blossom richly blending
A complex beauty—marvel bright and rare!
Admire its glowing hues, it boasts withal

A snowy lustre—laud each paler charm,
And lo, the morning tints are on its petals!
Such the faint blush that cups unwonted lend
To pallid cheeks—So wakes the early maid,
When beauty claims her matutinal care!
—Forgive the poet's hesitating strain:
How hard at once t' admire and to describe!

Though the eunuch was unable to judge of the merit of the lines, he still perceived the facility with which they had been composed. "This young fellow," said he, "has a most extraordinary talent; he will hardly relinquish Shueypingsin, who I understand, too, is a young woman of uncommon understanding.

"I am just as determined as he can be not to relinquish her;" replied the minister,—"I must revive that affair of his invitation to her house, and prevail on some bold member of the Censorate to present a remonstrance to the emperor, with a view to break off the marriage;—I shall then have my revenge."

But to see the mirror grow brighter as it was rubbed, and the fount run clearer as it flowed, the reader must proceed to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

"THE EXPOSURE OF SECRET INTRIGUES LEADS TO THE DISPLAY OF REAL MERIT."

'Tis by the surface only that the crowd
Admire or blame; few from the heart and mind
Conclusions draw. *Their* hidden cold and warmth
Is hardly palpable:—*their* latent sweets,
Or sours, no tongue can try! When the day-dreams
Of some are fled, what need again to waste
Their thoughts in vain surmises?—'Twill appear
On candid inquest, that the wise and good
Claim their own latitude of action.

We have seen how the minister and the eunuch contrived, under plea of the emperor's order regarding some flower-pieces, to inveigle Teihchungyu into the house of the latter, in order to marry his niece; and how, when they felt quite certain of success, the emperor's command that Teihchungyu should join the entertainment conferred upon the victorious leader, entirely ruined their whole plot.

They were both exceedingly provoked, and consulted what was to be done next. "Though we have heard," said the minister, "of their inhabiting separate chambers, the general impression is that they are married, and it really seems a hopeless scheme to get them otherwise contracted. We had better take up the business of his lodgement

lodgement at her house, and by giving it a colouring of scandal, prevail on some influential member of the Censorate to accuse them to the emperor, on the ground of their disgracing the public morals, by patching up previous irregularities with marriage. I will then get you to procure an order from his majesty to the Tribunal of Rites to investigate their case, while I employ the magistrate of their district to make inquiries, and send up such a report as shall suit our purpose. In this manner we may get them apart."

"And when they are once apart," said the eunuch, "I will petition his majesty concerning my niece's marriage. The young man will hardly be able to evade it after that." Their consultation ended, we leave them to prosecute their plot in secret.

Seek a new name for envy, and 'twill prove
'The heart's depravity.'—The envious strive
To frustrate what is good, and mischief love
For its own sake.

Teihchungyu, who had so happily escaped by means of the emperor's command to attend the banquet, related to his father, on his return home, the events of the day. "It appears to me," said the Censor, "that your union with Shueypingsin is already virtually concluded, in name at least; and though you continue to occupy separate chambers, it cannot be denied that you are man and wife;—then why not bring her at once to your own home, instead of exciting attention by this half espousal? If the emperor's command had not most fortunately

intervened, you would, to say the least, have contracted a dreadful enmity with the eunuch. Go, then, and consult with your bride, and arrange a speedy removal to your own home, in order to put an end to their schemes."

Teihchungyu went accordingly to the young lady, and acquainted her with his father's advice. She, however, replied, " I am not unaware, that being virtually your wife, I need not demur to live with you; but past circumstances remain yet the subject of slander; your fame and merits, expose you to envy and detraction, while I myself am not free from malicious attacks. Were we too hastily to complete our union, we might not be able to prove our innocence hereafter, and it would therefore, be the part of wisdom to defer it."

" I am fully aware," replied he, of the excellence of your motives; but by so long delaying to carry you home, I feel that I disappoint the earnest wishes of my father and mother."

" The only persons whom we need guard against," said Shueypingsin, " are the minister and his son, and their extreme rage and disappointment at our success in effecting this union, cannot extend beyond a certain time. If you wish, therefore, to gratify your father and mother, there is no reason why you should not take me to your house, and perform as it were a second espousal; while I trust that you will still consent for the present to our remaining separate, with a view to what may yet happen."

Teihchungyu

Teihchungyu was overjoyed to find that she was not unwilling he should carry her home. " Your proposal," said he, " so well accommodates both parties, that I cannot but accede to it."

He accordingly proceeded to acquaint his own parents, as well as the father of his bride, and engaged the astronomical board* to fix the most felicitous period for the solemnization;—then inviting afresh all those relations and friends who had attended on the last occasion, the public became acquainted with the completion of the marriage ceremonies, while the young couple, in point of fact, still continued to live separately at home.

All say that when the genial spring doth come,
No floweret but shall blow;—but there's a bud,
Within this bow'r, still guards its virgin charms.

When the minister heard that Teihchungyu had carried his bride home, his vexation was such as to lead him immediately to bribe a member of the Censorate, with whom he was intimate, to present an accusation against the parties. The charges were presently made out, and ran as follows:

" Wongih, inspector general of the province Shense, addresses his majesty in the case of a marriage contracted under circumstances injurious to the public morals, and intreats the imperial goodness to institute an inquiry, with a view to benefit the great cause of morality.

" Of the five human relations, that between husband and

* By whom the calendar is constructed.

and wife has the priority;—of the three thousand rites, that of marriage is the most important. Hence the separation between the sexes, which the sovereign law has enjoined in conformity with ancient institutions. The very lowest of the people observe these; and there can be no excuse when persons of rank, of different sexes, inhabit the same house without any previous forms of marriage;—there can be still less when the fathers, being great officers of state, subsequently unite the same persons in wedlock, with a knowledge of all the circumstances. This, however, has been the conduct of Shueykeuyih and his daughter;—of Teihying and his son.

"It is the duty of my office to report to your majesty all things of consequence that I may see and hear. In passing along the way, I met with a marriage procession,—which in itself is nothing extraordinary;—but my attention was excited by seeing the road filled with persons who pointed and laughed at the train as it approached, and who stood talking and expressing their astonishment after it had passed. Such was my surprise, that I inquired whose were the nuptials, and was informed that it was Teihchungyu, of the imperial college, who espoused the daughter of the president Shueykeuyih. On asking the reason of their exclamations, I learned that the bridegroom had been formerly nursed by the bride in her own secluded dwelling—a proceeding to which scandal necessarily attached: while

the

the present conduct of the parents, in bringing about so irregular a marriage was a disgrace to the public morals. Greatly disturbed at this intelligence, I dared not to refrain from reporting it to your majesty.

" Now marriage being the chief civil rite, if marriage be not duly regulated, all other rites must run to disorder ;—a minister's son being the example of the people, his disgraceful conduct must serve to excuse the same in his inferiors. I humbly entreat your majesty, in consideration of the importance of the case, to command the tribunal of Rites to set on foot an instant inquiry, and ascertain if the couple now married had really such previous acquaintance. The punishment of their delinquency will preserve the cause of morality from injury, and have a deeply beneficial effect in promoting virtuous unions. With this statement of circumstances, I await your majesty's command in the utmost solicitude."

When this address had reached the imperial council, the members felt disposed to slight and reject it. " What means can there be," said they, " of proving what occurred so long ago in the interior of a female dwelling; or what utility in investigating a rumour heard in the street ?" The eunuch, however, repeatedly pressed them on the subject, urging the importance of the case; and they at last felt themselves obliged to recommend that the proper tribunal should take cognizance of it. Not satisfied with this, the eunuch waited until the

the case came before the emperor, and contrived that the person, whose business it was, should present the address for his majesty's personal inspection.

On looking over this, the emperor expressed his surprise that a young man like Teihchungyu should have been nursed by Shueypingsin, a female, in her own private dwelling, and desired to be furnished with some explanation. The Tribunal of Rites was therefore especially commanded to make a clear investigation, and report the result.

When the imperial order was issued, several days had already elapsed since the young couple were regularly espoused at the house of the bridegroom. The alarm of the Censor was great on hearing the news—he went in haste to speak and consult with his son and daughter-in-law. "What enmity can this Wongih have towards you," inquired he, "that should lead him to present such an accusation to the emperor?"

"It is no scheme of his," replied Teihchungyu, "but of the minister. We have long anticipated something of the kind, and been prepared for it;—our expectations are at last confirmed."

"But it is quite necessary for you to answer it in your own justification," observed the Censor.

"I am aware," said his son, "that an explanation will be requisite; but it is yet too soon. Let me wait until the inquiry has been made, and the reply presented,—it will then be time for my story."

"That

"That may be true," said his father; "but as you are aware that you have been accused, it seems advisable to offer some speedy justification,—people may otherwise suspect that you are guilty, and have nothing to say in your own defence."

"Did the charges impeach my official duty to the emperor," replied Teihchungyu, "I should feel bound to present an immediate explanation; but this accusation relates to my private conduct while in Shantong. By deferring my answer, I may perhaps be relieved by the truth of the report from the necessity of any explanation; but if the report proves a false one, I may proceed deliberately to confute its falsehood. At present I have no grounds to go upon."

His father, after a pause, agreed that he was right. "This accuser," added he, "belongs to my own department of the Censorate: what does he mean by such an attack?—I must be very angry with him."

"There is no occasion for that, sir," said his son, "I will answer for his meeting with his due deserts." The Censor followed his son's advice, and agreed to await the result in patience.

Prepared for trouble 'ere the trouble came,
He met it with a mind all undismay'd;
—Assail'd by calumny, his heart was clear,
Th' attempt to shame him could no blushes raise.

We leave them, and turn to the Tribunal of Rites, who, on receipt of the emperor's private order, lost no time in transmitting it to the provincial governor of Shantong. The

The minister Kwoloongtung, for fear that the subordinate authorities might not second his wishes, addressed a secret letter from himself to the new magistrate of the district, engaging his good offices —;desiring his son, at the same time, to present such bribes as might secure the due exaggerations and additions to the real facts in the report, and make sure of every exertion in their favour.

On learning that Teihchungyu had been denounced to the emperor, Kwoketsu felt the utmost delight. He waited not the arrival of the orders, but proceeded straight to the magistrate, taking with him a hundred pieces of gold, and his father's letter.

But who might be this new magistrate?—no other than the scholar himself, whose bride Teihchungyu had rescued from the palace of Takwae! By hard study, he had placed himself on the same list with Teihchungyu at the annual examination, and upon the recall of the former magistrate, was chosen to supply his place. On the offer of the money, and the perusal of the letter, he soon understood that he was required to make such scandalous additions to the report concerning Teihchungyu's stay at the house of Shueypingsin, as would lead to their disgrace.

"What!" exclaimed he to himself with surprise and alarm, "is it my benefactor that I am called upon to treat in this way? But how shall I proceed? It is an admirable occasion to pay my debt of gratitude. I must

must not, however, betray myself to Kwoketsu;—for that would place him on his guard." He accordingly accepted the money, and pretended to enter into the scheme: and Kwoketsu, feeling satisfied that his object was gained, went away in high glee.

The new magistrate then proceeded to summon before him the subordinate officers permanently attached to his office, and asked if they knew the occasion of Teihchungyu being nursed at the house of the young lady?

He learned from them that it originated in Kwoketsu's violent attempt to get possession of the young lady's person, and that the latter, being rescued by Teihchungyu, was led by her gratitude to protect him from the plots of his enemies.

"But they were both so young," observed the magistrate, "that you may perhaps have heard something scandalous in relation to their intercourse?"

The people replied, that nobody could have ascertained what was done in the house, had not the late magistrate, suspecting something wrong, sent a confidential dependent, named Tanyew, to conceal himself at night in the young lady's mansion, and see what was going on. By this means he ascertained, beyond a doubt, the perfect innocence and virtue of both parties, and ever afterwards respected Teihchungyu like a god.

It was with the utmost satisfaction that the magistrate listened to this account. "It is not his heroism alone,"

alone," said he to himself, "that is so surpassing—his integrity is equally worthy of respect. I should be guilty of the basest ingratitude, did I not return such an answer to this inquiry from Peking as must fully clear up his character." He accordingly sent for the spy, and secured the production of his testimony when required; then summoning the head-priest of the monastery before him, he peremptorily demanded what poison had been administered on that occasion? The priest replied, that Kwoketsu, fearful of the consequences, had prohibited the use of actual poison, and limited him to the violent drug *patow*, in connexion with rhubarb, to reduce their victim to extremity.

Having procured this evidence, our magistrate waited four or five days, until the order came to him from the provincial governor to set an inquiry on foot; when he made a clear and circumstantial statement of the whole case, from beginning to end. The governor's duty was merely to transmit the same to the Tribunal of Rites; —and the latter, on inspecting it, soon perceived that the magistrate's report proved Teihchungyu to be a prodigy of excellence, and Shueypingsin brighter than gems, and chaster than ice:—while the whole evidence went greatly to criminate the minister's son.

The members of the tribunal had engaged their services to the minister, and wished to procure such a statement of the case as might involve Teihchungyu; but when they found that the present report, on the contrary,

contrary, was endless in his praise, they were obliged to send quietly for the minister, and shew it to him.

His rage was unbounded, and broke out into open abuse of the magistrate. "What," said he, "does this newly promoted animal, after all my condescensions, and the presents I sent him, go and frame a report in favour of my enemy? Even this might have been borne—but he must needs throw imputations on my son! I will take care that he does not escape the consequences of such behaviour."

He accordingly begged the tribunal to detain the report for some time, while he proceeded to his friend the member of the Censorate, and prevailed on him to present an accusation against the new magistrate, charging him with ignorance of the past affairs of his district—with corruption—and with the guilt of making false statements; recommending at the same time that he should he arrested and punished. The emperor was advised to order the provincial governor to set on foot a fresh inquiry on the subject of Teihchungyu's residence at the mansion of the young lady.

The influence of the eunuch within the place procured the imperial assent to this in less than a couple of days, and when the order reached Shantong, the governor sent for the new magistrate. "You have been too tenacious of the matter of fact," said he: —"When the minister wrote to you, admitting that you would not falsely accuse Teihchungyu, it would have been

been quite sufficient had you cleared up his case;—why accuse Kwoketsu and provoke his father? He has procured your arrest and recall, and I have no means of helping you."

The magistrate justified himself from the charge of having said too much. "When I received the order," observed he, "from the Tribunal of Rites, I could only report back what was unanimously declared by every witness, and most fully corroborated; I did nothing partial for the sake of Teihchungyu, nor with a view to implicate Kwoketsu. I found on investigation, that the entertainment of Teihchungyu at the young lady's house arose entirely from his enemy's machinations, and was obliged to state the truth. Had I concealed any thing, some other person might have accused *me*, and then where would have been my defence?"

"The consequences of saying too little," said the governor, laughing, "might possibly have been felt by you—but they were at least uncertain: while the consequences of saying too much have already overwhelmed you."

"The charges under which I now labour," replied the magistrate, "are false, and may be answered; while admitting that I had escaped the immediate punishment of the opposite course, the guilt at least would have been real, and I could not escape *that*. Hence I did not venture to consult present ease at the expense of future sorrow."

"But

"But after all the pains you have taken to attain your present rank," said the governor, "it was hardly advisable to be so over-scrupulous. Suppose you draw up a fresh report, and let me carry you through this business."

"The facts," replied the other, "are as I have stated them;—to distort them into another shape would be a violation of my public duty, and of what I owe to his majesty—I dare not follow your advice."

"Well then," replied the governor, "as you are so determined, there is the imperial order to arrest you. However, I will not put it immediately into effect: do you go and prepare yourself with all diligence to plead your cause at Peking."

He bowed, and promised obedience; then sending for his seal of office, he deposited it, in due form, with the governor. On his return home, he secured the secret witness, and the old priest of the monastery —together with the letter from the minister, and the bribe which had been offered to himself—and thus provided, he commenced his journey to the capital.

> Nothing did he extenuate, nor add,
> But faithfully rehears'd each circumstance
> From origin to end—his friend he help'd
> On one hand—and on th' other serv'd his prince.

On his arrival at Peking, he could not, as an accused person, appear before the emperor, but delivered himself straight to the criminal tribunal, to receive his

his trial. That tribunal assembled without loss of time, and proceeded to interrogate him.

"By what means," was it demanded, "could you, who were appointed so long after that business took place, obtain such proofs as should enable you to pronounce both parties innocent of the alleged charge. No doubt you have been bribed on this occasion?"

"My appointment," replied he, "was subsequent to those events; but I received the order to investigate them, and could not but obey. Had the facts been doubtful and ambiguous, I might easily have stated them as such; but all those attached to my office unanimously concurred in the same statement, and spoke of it as a wonder. To have evaded it, therefore, under the plea of ignorance, and of its happening previous to my appointment, would have belied the title of my office."*

"But you were ordered to enquire concerning Teihchungyu and Shueypingsin:—what had you to do with Kwoketsu?"

"Every event must have a root and an origin," replied the magistrate; "and unless I had stated the causes of those facts, it would have been impossible to explain the facts themselves. The reason why Shueypingsin received the young man at her house was this—that he had rescued her at the magistrate's, and was subsequently in danger of his life. The occasion

* Chehëen literally means 'knowing the affairs of his district.

casion of Shueypingsin being carried by force before the magistrate, was the pretended imperial pardon invented by Kwoketsu—and Teihchungyu met her there, only in consequence of being hustled by the party who were carrying her off. If Kwoketsu had not carried her off, Teihchungyu would never have rescued her—if Teihchungyu had not rescued her, Kwoketsu, being a perfect stranger, could have had no motive to injure him—if Kwoketsu had not attempted to injure him, Shueypingsin was a secluded female, and would hardly have braved scandal so far as to remove him to her own house. Such was the beginning and end of the affair; and I felt bound to return a true statement to the tribunal of Rites."

"Very well,"—observed his judges; "but the residence of Teihchungyu at Shueypingsin's house was quite a private transaction—how could you tell that there was nothing clandestine in it? This is the ground on which you are accused of corruption."

"I certainly could know nothing on the subject myself," replied he; "but upon investigation I learned, that my predecessor in office had employed a confidential dependant to make observations, and thereby discovered those two persons to be the patterns of their sex. It was of too much importance for me to conceal. As to bribery,—I have brought with me a letter which I received from the minister, and a hundred pieces of gold which were offered me by his son.

These I dare not venture to conceal; and producing them thus in open court, trust that your lordships will present them for the imperial inspection."

The tribunal had engaged their services to the minister, and would gladly have persecuted their prisoner; —but his plain story, corroborated by the production of the letter and the bribe, left them no choice. They therefore desired him, under all the circumstances, to go forth and await the emperor's pleasure. He accordingly paid his respects and retired.

> Unmindful of their own deformities,
> The base would bring another's faults to view:
> But when the period of discovery comes,
> The shame doth all revert upon themselves!

Unable, from the character of the evidence, to do any thing for the minister, the Criminal tribunal had a communication with the tribunal of Rites, and reported the case to the emperor. His majesty looked at the report, and observed—"There were reasons, it appears, for the reception and succour which Shueypingsin gave to Teihchungyu in her house—She had a strong motive in her gratitude, and cannot be blamed." When he came to the proofs of their innocence, the emperor exclaimed, "If this be true, we may rejoice in having a second Loonantze."*

The eunuch who acted as private secretary, being in the cause of the eunuch Chow, now put in a sly word. "This must surely be a story," said he, "got up

* Vide ante, vol. i. p. 128, note.

up by the magistrate—there is, at least, no necessity for its being true: for in that case, the parties themselves, and their parents, having long since known your majesty's pleasure, would have maintained their own innocence, instead of preserving so continued a silence. Were there nothing intentional in their previous intercourse, how come they at last to be man and wife?—There must certainly be something yet undivulged."

The emperor listened to this suggestion, but made no reply. An order, however, was sent down to the following effect:

"The circumstances relating to the former intercourse of Teihchungyu with Shueypingsin, and the alliance subsequently contracted between the families of Shueykeuyih and Teihying, having been so differently stated by different authorities, the parties themselves are commanded to send up their respective explanations. Let Kwoloongtung likewise report concerning the alleged attempts of his son to obtain Shueypingsin in marriage, and await our decision."

The imperial command being intimated to all parties, the President and Censor, with their son and daughter, felt that they had nothing to be ashamed of, and therefore prepared their reports in perfect tranquillity. The minister, however, was in the utmost consternation. "I hoped," thought he to himself, "that I should be more than a match for these peo-

ple;—but it has all reverted on myself. If I disavow having sent a messenger to the frontier to solicit the marriage, there will be proofs against me—if I acknowledge having done so, I fear it will confirm the allegations against my son." After repeated consideration, he resolved to avow the mission to the frontier, but to deny the attempts on his son's part, and accordingly made his statement to this effect:—

"Your majesty's servant, the minister Kwoloong-tung, presents this humble memorial in reply.

"Being first induced to select a daughter-in-law, in consideration of her rank and merits, I afterwards found that she was subject to suspicions, which would not justify my continuing the marriage negociations.

"My situation being near the imperial person, and having a son who inherited the profession of letters, and aspired to the honours of the imperial college, I deemed that his age required me to select for him a spouse. I was unadvisedly led, by false rumours of the young lady's merits, to despatch a messenger on a certain day to the frontier, to solicit from Shueykeuyih, my fellow townsman, his daughter Shueypingsin in marriage with my son. But my messenger being gone, I was repeatedly assailed with rumours disgraceful to the lady's reputation, which led me to break off the negociation in the middle: and I know not in what manner the magistrate can, at this day, be able to prove or disprove what occurred

curred at that former period; or how he pretends so unjustly to slander my son with the charge of a forcible espousal. But if he had espoused her by force, she must have become his wife:—do they mean, then, that she ran away from him like Hoongfŏ,* who is said to have discovered a hero in the poor and mean Letsing? This is not easily to be explained.

"Such is my humble reply to his majesty's inquiry. I look up and intreat the celestial intelligence not to permit base persons to slander the worthy and honourable:—thus may the great cause of virtue be advanced, and the public morals preserved from injury. I anxiously await the imperial commands."

Teihchungyu now presented his memorial, which ran as follows:—

"Your majesty's servant Teihchungyu, an officer of the imperial college, humbly offers up this statement in obedience to commands received. The private history of a family, and the adventures of a female, would never have been intruded on the sight and hearing of the all-great Emperor,—but his commands give weight and importance even to these, and therefore is this circumstantial memorial presented.

"When

* The wife of a noble under the dynasty *Suy*, who falling in love with a person named *Letsing*, in a low and mean condition, made her escape to him by night, and married him. They fled together to a neighbouring state, and became instrumental to the destruction of the reigning family, and the rise of the dynasty Täng.

" When, in compliance with my father's wishes, I undertook a tour of instruction through Shantong province, my mind was wholly bent on learning, and my own affairs being neglected for this, I was not likely to interfere in those of others:—but on reaching Leih-ching Hëen, I was suddenly met by a crowd of people, who nearly overturned me in their passage. The dispute which followed conducted me to the magistrate's tribunal, where I learned for the first time, that it was Kwoketsu, son of the minister, who had forcibly seized Shueypingsin, daughter of Shueykeuyih, to make her his wife. My indignation was roused to see such an abuse of the marriage rites, and to find the magistrate driven by power to sanction such violence. But when I caused the restoration of Shueypingsin, I was equally unacquainted with her and with her persecutor. I merely righted a case of oppression in my path, and had no reason to think that I either conferred obligation on the one hand, or excited enmity on the other:—the enmity, however, proved equal to seeking my death by poison, and the obligation led to rescuing my life from the attempt. In the midst of my peril, I knew neither my enemy, nor my benefactress;—but after my rescue, I learned that the person who sought my life was Kwoketsu, and the person who had saved it was Shueypingsin. Though the attempt was envenomed, I had escaped it, and might let it rest in silence;—but with regard to my benefactress, I was more attentive, and

soon

soon discovered the heroic virtue which despised slander in a good cause; the wisdom which had foiled her enemies in every attempt; the benevolence which administered aid and medicine in my perilous condition; the sense of propriety which still guarded every requisite observance; and the sincerity and truth, which were always the same to the last. My gratitude and respect I could never adequately prove, and therefore it was impossible for me to cherish any selfish schemes of my own. Our late marriage has been in compliance with the commands of my own father and her's. Mine was led to it by his wish to select the most worthy daughter-in-law, and without any regard to past events—her's, by feeling grateful to me for the services I had rendered him in protecting the leader Howheaou, and with no knowledge of his daughter's previous conduct. After many scruples we complied: for my father-in-law's misplaced regard for myself, and my own father's perfect acquaintance with the virtues of Shueypingsin, determined them both on perfecting so desirable a match. We accordingly maintained what we deemed right, and contracted the marriage, without paying farther regard to what might be said. Although, however, the nuptial festival has been twice celebrated, we have as yet been content with the mere name of marriage, in compliance with our parents' wishes; we have not really completed it, from a regard to our honour.

"These private details would not have been intruded on

on your majesty's attention, except in obedience to the imperial command, by which I am required to present this true statement of facts. I await in anxiety and awe the decision of your majesty."

The statement of Shueypingsin next followed, to this effect:

" Shueypingsin, wife of Teihchungyu, of the imperial college, humbly addresses her memorial to his majesty.

" Repeated trials are requisite to prove the virtue of gold :—to be free from flaws, is the first test of a gem's value. It was my ill fate in early youth to lose my mother; while my father offended your majesty, and was exiled to the frontier. Thus alone and deserted at home, it much rather became me to drink my tears in silence and solitude, than wildly to turn my thoughts towards marriage. It was however my unhappy fate to fall in the way of Kwoketsu, son of the minister, who observing my unprotected condition, formed the resolution to obtain me. I was still able to frustrate all his wily schemes—but at length, in open defiance of your sacred majesty, and with an audacity unequalled, he relied so far on his father's high station as to send a crowd of his dependants to my house, under pretence of announcing the imperial pardon, and thus carried me off by force. I was as a leaf blown by the winds, or as a bird in the hands of its destroyer. Virtue and the laws alike withheld their protection, and I looked to death as my only refuge—when, most happily, we were met

met by Teihchungyu, in his tour through the province; —he arrested my ravishers, and with a noble indignation compelled the magistrate to send me safely home. This act, however, was like the spontaneous burst of the thunder-cloud—it was performed with no particular reference to myself, nor with any prospect of return. In the mean while my wicked enemy, conscious of failure in his open violence, adopted the secret scheme of poisoning my deliverer by the hands of the priest with whom he lodged. While thus helpless and in peril, it was impossible for me whom he had so greatly served, unless I had been a she-wolf or a tigress, to sit by and see him sacrificed without once attempting to save him. Hence I contrived his removal to my house, and effected his cure through medical aid. This doubtless was not in exact conformity with my situation as a female; but the extremity of the case called for an extreme remedy; and perhaps charity and wisdom might not condemn me. I braved scandal, because I was conscious of innocence: but to conclude our adventure by marriage, seemed calculated to increase our embarrassment. Hence when my father wished, out of gratitude to Teihchungyu, to make me his wife, I persisted in declining; and hence too, though we have complied with our parents' wishes in going through the ceremonies of marriage, our scruples have yet kept us separate. The motive was neither pride, nor love of notoriety; but a wish to preserve ourselves inviolate from the stain of reproach.

" With

" With reference to Kwoketsu's desperate schemes—his engaging the assistance of the commissioner, and the ultimate attempt to force my exiled father's consent, —these acts were doubtless the excess of violence and corruption; and their late endeavours, after every previous failure, to invade your majesty's ear through the representations of a censor, prove that both father and son are unrepenting in guilt. The nation's laws, however, and your majesty's wisdom, will dispose of their case;—it befits not me to intrude any comment: but, in obedience to the imperial command, I offer up this true memorial, and anxiously attend the final decision."

Shueypingsin's address was followed by that of her father-in-law.

" Teihying, member of the imperial Censorate, presents a humble statement of facts in obedience to his majesty's command.

" Your servant has understood, that the father's commands constitute the main foundation of a rightful marriage, and that a virtuous daughter-in-law is the proper object of the parents' selection. If both these essentials exist, the rites of wedlock cannot be disgraced, but rather, honour must accrue to the cause of virtue. —We therefore felt ourselves beyond the reach of detraction. Your servant's office constitutes him an example to the empire;—whatever he perceives wrong it is his peculiar duty to set right. He would therefore not readily have

have exposed himself to scorn or blame by failing in so important a point as the selection of a proper match for his son. This son, though an unworthy member of the imperial college, is not unacquainted with what propriety and virtue demand. I had long sought for him a spouse, and found none suitable: but at length discovered that Shueykeuyih, president of the military tribunal, had a daughter, Shueypingsin, who though immured in seclusion, was yet known to possess extraordinary virtue and understanding, and who, notwithstanding her unprotected condition, had foiled every attempt of her violent and unprincipled suitors.

"I was impatient that my son should be contracted to her, but still at a loss for some one to propose the match; when the President himself, on his return from exile, thinking the young couple admirably suited to each other, became very desirous that my son should espouse his daughter. The marriage was the consequence of our mutual wishes: and as it was attended with every lawful preliminary, we felt ourselves independent of calumny.

"My son, however, made objections on the ground of his previous adventure with the young lady: but when I inquired into the circumstances, I discovered that the rescue at the magistrate's was an act of the most generous resolution; and the subsequent conduct of the young lady, an example of grateful benevolence. Though the mean and base may give such actions bad names,

names, the virtuous and noble will appreciate them as they deserve. They were not merely blameless, but worthy of the highest admiration. The Three stars, therefore, shone upon their nuptials, in spite of all their scruples; and my son carried his bride home in compliance with our wishes. At the same time, however, that they went through the prescribed ceremonies of marriage, they persisted with unnecessary strictness in living apart: though as this concerned none but themselves, we made no objections.

" In regard to the late attacks of our enemies, we can attribute these to nothing but disappointment at their own failure. Their false and slanderous imputations will hardly escape the wisdom and penetration of your majesty. I therefore presume not to comment upon them, but reverently offer up this statement in obedience to the imperial command, waiting the result with anxiety and awe."

Lastly came the memorial of the President.

" Shueykeuyih, president of the Military tribunal, prepares this address. Your majesty's servant has ever understood, that wedlock is a joyful rite—not an occasion for the abuse of power: that concord should prevail in marriage, —not violence and intimidation. It is said in the ancient book of odes, that 'where there is the least opposition or doubt, it is generally fatal to the nuptials;' how much more when forcible seizure is made, as if by a band of robbers! Perceiving that her suitor trusted to his rank and

and power, to dispense with the observance of all propriety, my daughter made a vow of death in preference to submission, and retreated from his addresses. It was my unhappy fate to lose my wife, and to have no male offspring;—only this daughter, whom I fondly wished to supply the defect. It does not befit me to boast of her retired and feminine virtues; but I may say that she is not altogether defective in the qualities that best adorn her sex. She was not likely, while her father remained in distant exile, to give herself away in marriage without the due observance of all the rites. Still Kwoketsu carried on his violent suit. At one time he counterfeited the imperial pardon, to seize her in my house—at another, he endeavoured to carry her off by stratagem at the Southern farm—lastly, with the rapacity of a bird or beast of prey, he endeavoured to overwhelm her with the commissioner's power. His wickedness therefore was complete!—and unless my daughter's own ability had saved her from the tiger's jaws, she must certainly have been his victim.

"The son's acts might be regarded as the conduct of a young man spoiled by wealth and luxury; but what is to be said of his father the minister, your majesty's exalted servant, and the guardian of the ritual observances! He was so blinded by partiality to his son, as to assail me by threats in my place of exile; and had the fear of consequences extorted my consent, the cause of virtue would have received a fatal blow. I considered that

that myself and daughter were as nothing, in comparison with the immutable claims of morality and justice. My resolute denial provoked the minister's resentment, and he proposed to your majesty that I should suffer death;—little expecting that the merits and success of the reprieved general would convert my proposed death into pardon and advancement. The minister then bought over a member of the Censorate to attack my daughter's character:—he little thought that this attack would lead to the vindication of her innocence. This vindication your majesty will find in my daughter's own address; I presume not to intrude it afresh on the imperial intelligence. The extreme guilt, however, of the minister and his son are such, that in offering up this true memorial to your majesty, I humbly suggest that they may be subjected to trial, and their punishment determined. I anxiously wait the imperial commands."

The five memorials being thus presented, would the reader learn the result, and see the honours that awaited virtue and innocence at the hands of the emperor, he must peruse the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

" THE GEM BEING PROVED TO BE PERFECT, THE FORTUNATE UNION IS CONCLUDED."

Full was the council, and the councillors
Learn'd in the ritual—but t'illustrate reason,
And widely spread the influence of example,
Pertain'd to th' Emperor.—Forth beaming bright
Th' intelligence supreme their case illumin'd—
And every slander ceas'd, and all confess'd
Such virtue could exist.—Then number not
Our pages with the host of vulgar tales—
The history of the good and brave is here!

WHEN the five memorials had been presented, the Emperor read them over, and having assembled his council in the Ordinary palace,* referred it to them to decide what measures should be taken.

The council deliberated, and gave this opinion: " It is plain from the memorials, that the violent measures of the minister's son led to the acquaintance of Teih-chungyu with Shueypingsin: but since his criminal designs against either were unsuccessful, he need be treated with the less severity. The generous exertions of Teihchungyu, by which he incurred so much personal risk, were doubtless highly creditable; and the gratitude of Shueypingsin, who braved suspicion on his account, no less praiseworthy. If, however, alone and retired as they

* *Pëen-tëen*—In like manner *pëen-ee* means 'garments worn on ordinary occasions.'

they were, they abused the occasion to clandestine ends, their previous merit vanishes altogether. Should the magistrate's statement—that they were observed, and proved to be innocent—be true, they have exemplified in their own persons all that is most excellent in past and present times. Ignorant as we are of the facts, the evidence that we can obtain must decide the case. The present magistrate, however, having been appointed subsequently to these events, can state only what he has *heard*, not what he personally *knows*:—it is somewhat insufficient evidence. May we therefore humbly advise your majesty to require a circumstantial relation from the former officer of the district—the truth and falsehood may then be distinguished."

The emperor betokened his assent to their counsel, and issued the following command. "Let the late magistrate of Leihching Hëen make a certified report of all the circumstances relating to Teihchungyu's treatment during his sickness—there must be no concealment or collusion. Respect this."

The imperial pleasure was transmitted without delay to the former magistrate, who since his recall had been promoted to the station of inspector-general in the province of Pechele. Being on a visit to one of the cities of his jurisdiction, he learned that Teihchungyu had concluded his marriage with Shueypingsin, and that being accused to the Emperor by one of the Censorate, the present order was the consequence.

He

He received it with the utmost satisfaction. "I urged this marriage to the young man myself," thought he, "and nothing but our distant separation would have prevented my continuing to urge it. My mind has been long set on it, and I rejoice that he at length attended to his father's wishes. The emperor's order is an excellent occasion for executing a design which I have some time entertained." He accordingly prepared a detailed statement of facts; and his address ran as follows:—

"Paoutsze, inspector-general of Pechele, presents this humble address in obedience to your majesty's commands.

"There is no *virtue* more disinterested than to afford relief in distress—no greater *heroism* than to remain unmoved in danger—no *integrity* superior to that which resists temptation—no *talent* more estimable than the ability to defeat one's enemies. When I received from your majesty the charge of Leihching Hëen, unworthy as I was, it became my duty to extend the benefits of the imperial rule by espousing the cause of virtue. But it chanced that Kwoketsu, son of the minister, having heard of the beauty of Shueypingsin, daughter of Shueykeuyih, then member, and now president of the military tribunal, determined on espousing her. He prevailed on my immediate superior in office to appoint me the agent of the marriage, which I was bound in obedience to accept. The young lady's father being in exile, her uncle Shueyun was the promoter of the

match, and after continued persecution, extorted his niece's verbal compliance. As the presentation of the nuptial ticket is the ordinary mode of announcing the acceptance of proposals, Shueyun despatched such a ticket to Kwŏketsu. Shueypingsin, however, who knew her duty, was resolved not marry without her father's authority; but, urged to desperation by her uncle, she had the talent to substitute the nuptial ticket of her uncle's daughter in lieu of her own—a stratagem which Shueyun's ignorance prevented his detecting. When the wedding day arrived, she declined leaving her house, on the ground of the nuptial ticket not being her's; and her uncle, urged by the extremity of the case, sent his own daughter instead—while Kwoketsu, who had accepted the ticket without inquiry, was compelled to submit in silence. This was his *first* discomfiture by Shueypingsin.

" Provoked by disappointment, he resolved on changing the nuptial ticket, and, after enticing the young lady on a visit to his house as a new connexion, on there seizing and claiming her as his proper wife. But he miscalculated her extraordinary sagacity—for she accepted his invitation, allowed him to collect all his noble acquaintances, and proceeding in her chair even to his very doors, made him extravagantly elate at the thoughts of such complete success;—when hurrying all at once back to her house, under the plea of an ill-boding sound in the music, she entirely eluded him a *second* time.

" Still more provoked, his schemes grew proportionately

ately desperate;—and on finding that the young lady went regularly at the autumnal period to sacrifice at her mother's tomb, he laid a strong party in ambush to seize her. She, however, proceeded openly with a large attendance, and returned in the same conspicuous manner, in order to make it the more public. When he thought that he had possession of her chair and person, his friends were all assembled to witness his success; but on opening the sedan, it proved to be empty, with the exception of a great heap of stones and a yellow bundle—upon which the whole assembly joined in laughing at this *third* discomfiture of Kwoketsu.

" Enraged at his three failures, he counterfeited the news of Shueykeuyih's recall from exile, and sent a party to her house to announce it. On hearing it was the imperial order, the young lady felt obliged to come forth and receive it; and thus falling into their hands, was carried off:—but she had the resolution to conceal a poniard about her person, prepared to destroy herself in case of need. Teihchungyu then chanced to be on his travels through the province, and being hustled by the procession, became involved in a quarrel, which ended in their all coming before me; who after some inquiry, dismissed the people, and sent the young lady home. I hoped that all parties would remain quiet for the future. Kwoketsu, however, unable to put up with his disgrace, and despairing of success with Shueypingsin, resolved to gratify his revenge on Teihchungyu. He

employed the priest of the monastery, where the youth lodged, to injure his health by drugs. Teihchungyu was ignorant of his own danger; but happily for him, Shueypingsin was so grateful for the service just received at his hands, that she could not bear to sit still and see him perish; and accordingly removed him quietly to her house, and restored him to health by medical aid. In thus calmly defying calumny and detraction, she could be supported solely by the exaltedness and purity of her motives. But Kwoketsu, when he heard of it, became more exasperated than ever:—he endeavoured to asperse the character of the parties, and to prevail on me to persecute them as a scandal to the public morals. My duty required that I should take the matter up: but I considered that this was an occasion on which virtue might be displayed, as well as the reverse, and therefore would not condemn them without proof. I could obtain this in no other way than by sending a skilful spy to observe them,—and through him I discovered the virtues of this extraordinary pair. Their intercourse united the display of gratitude and friendship with the observance of every propriety. Their conversation was of the most exalted character, and without an expression that could bear any ill-construction;—in a word, they realized in themselves all that is most celebrated in the history of morals, either past or present.

Considering the rarity of such excellence in either sex,

sex, I concluded that heaven must have produced this pair for each other, and that unless it were Teih-chungyu, Shueypingsin could never have a husband worthy of her;—except Shueypingsin, Teihchungyu could never meet a suitable spouse. I therefore undertook myself to be the marriage negociator, and proposed to Teihchungyu this excellent union, calculated as it was to throw a lustre on the wedded state;—to my surprise, however, the young man's strictness of scruple took alarm at my proposition, and he departed in anger; confirming, at the same time, the high opinion I had formed of his disinterested virtue. I would willingly have brought it to the knowledge of your majesty; but the lowness of my office, and the number of the intermediate channels, made it to be attended with too many difficulties. Heaven, however, seemed resolved to accomplish its purposes; and Shueykeuyih being recalled from exile, in consequence of the successful support afforded by Teihchungyu to the leader Howheaou, their marriage was the ultimate result. It doubtless was the work of heaven, though it concerned man alone!—and I rejoiced much at hearing of so excellent an union, by which the cause of virtue was illustrated. The Censor Wongih, however, without any knowledge of the real facts, presented a false accusation against the parties;—and led by your majesty's gracious inquiry, which enables me to gratify my anxious wishes, I gladly offer up this circumstantial statement,

in

in which the perfection of *virtue*, *heroism*, *integrity*, and *talent*, have been described. Beseeching the imperial intelligence to clear up the truth, and shed thereby upon the great cause of morality its due lustre, I await with gratitude your majesty's decision."

On the perusal of this paper, high satisfaction was apparent on the emperor's countenance.

"This Shueypingsin," said his majesty, "with such mental resources, is a most extraordinary young woman; —and Teihchungyu, whose virtue has been so much tried, must doubtless be intended by heaven to be her match. What possessed that Censor to present such a wild and incorrect statement!"

His majesty was about to issue his decree, awarding honours and distinctions to such unexampled merit,—but the eunuch Chow was still in close communication with, and had engaged the assistance of his colleague, who acted as secretary within the palace, and who therefore took this opportunity to put in his suggestion.

"The circumstances," said he, "relating to the residence of the young people under the same roof, rest solely on the evidence of that secret emissary of the magistrate; and should there be any falsehood in this, your majesty's decree in their favour would act very much to the prejudice of the imperial dignity. It appears to me, moreover, that the memorials of the parties themselves are open to much suspicion."

"In what respect?" inquired the emperor.

"The

" The statement of Teihchungyu," said the secretary, " asserts, ' that though the nuptial festival has been twice celebrated, they have yet been content with the mere name of marriage—they have not really completed it ;' while Shueypingsin's memorial in like manner states, that ' notwithstanding their having gone through the ceremonies of marriage, their scruples have still kept them separate,' as a precaution against the attacks of calumny. Now this boast seems to imply, that she is still in her former unmarried state, which is hardly to be believed ; and if this part of the history should be untrue, it unavoidably throws discredit on all the rest. May I humbly suggest to your majesty the necessity of farther inquiry."

" Then," said the emperor, " to-morrow at noon, let Teihchungyu and Shueypingsin be presented to us in full audience at the ordinary palace, where we will address them in person."

The secretary conveyed this order to the council, and they promulgated the same to all the great officers ; who upon the following day repaired in full assembly to the imperial audience.

> The sun's effulgence had begun to beam,
> When lo ! a passing cloud obscur'd his rays ;
> —But soon the floating mist shall be dispers'd,
> And the bright azure firmament appear !

When the emperor had ascended his throne, the assembled courtiers paid their respects ; and his majesty then desired that Teihchungyu should be presented to him.

him. He advanced and prostrated himself to the ground. The son of heaven was pleased with his youth and comeliness. "Was it you," said his majesty, "that entered by force into the palace of Takwae, and rescued thence the poor scholar, with his wife and daughter?"

"It was your majesty's servant," replied Teihchungyu.

—"And who became surety for the leader Howheaou?" The youth again answered in the affirmative.

"Those two actions," continued the emperor, "denote courage and sagacity in which we sincerely rejoice. Courage and sagacity however, are comparatively common virtues:—but if, according to the magistrate's report concerning your stay at the house of Shueypingsin, you spent five days and nights alone under the same roof with a young female, without abusing the occasion, it is a miracle worthy of history. We ask you if this be true?"

"It is quite true," answered Teihchungyu; "but we boast not of that as a miracle, which our duty required of us."

"We believe it to be true," observed the emperor; "but the time elapsed has made the testimonies less decisive. You say in your memorial, that 'though the nuptial festival has been twice celebrated, you have been yet contented with the name of marriage;—you have not really completed it. What is the reason of this?

"We deemed that the suspicions which attached to our

our rendering each other important services, forbad our contracting the marriage union:—but urged by our parents' wishes, we felt obliged to comply, as far as the celebration of the marriage ceremonies. Had we become man and wife at once, the suspicions relating to our previous intercourse would have attached to us through life, without a possibility of refutation. We have, therefore, occupied separate apartments unto this day:—not from a love of notoriety, but to silence people's mouths, and wait until your majesty's command permitted us to complete a union, which should do honour to the name of marriage."

His majesty was much gratified by this reply. "We are to understand from your statement," said he, "that Shueypingsin is still a maiden?"

The order was then given that Shueypingsin should be presented. She came forward, and prostrated herself to the ground. The son of heaven turned his eyes upon her, and saw that she surpassed a flower or a willow in delicacy and grace;—that she was the very perfection of female beauty. His majesty asked if her name were not Shueypingsin;—and when she had answered in a distinct voice that it was, the emperor continued: "The former magistrate of your district has described to us, in his memorial, the uncommon address with which you thrice discomfited the schemes of Kwoketsu. Did these things really occur as related?"

"A simple maiden like myself," replied she, "would not

not have ventured into such a contest with Kwoketsu, had he not taken advantage of my father's exile, and my own defenceless condition, to use his power and influence to my prejudice. I was compelled to adopt those measures as the only means of escaping misery."

" But with such ability to escape misfortune," observed the emperor, " how came you not also to avoid the scandal which attached to moving Teihchungyu to your house."

" I felt bound to pay a debt of gratitude," replied she, "compared with which such scandal appeared trifling."

" But," observed his majesty, laughing, " if you cared so little for calumny when you were so liable to it—why be so over-scrupulous as to live separately, after being married with your parents' consent?"

" The other was but the calumny of a day," replied she, " and might have received its own refutation by my espousing another:—but the consequences of the late attack upon us would have continued through life; and, but for our caution, we might have riven our hearts, and shed our blood, without being able to prove our innocence. I should not have been able to appear before your majesty with that confidence which supports me this day."

The emperor listened to her with evident satisfaction: " Then," exclaimed he, " you are a pair that surpass

surpass even the most celebrated couple in history.* We feel bound to assert your innocence." His majesty accordingly commanded that four of the attendants of the inner palace should conduct Shueypingsin to the empress, who, with her ladies, might prove her innocence. They, accordingly, proceeded to wait upon the empress.

> The brightest gem, untried, is but a coarse
> Unshapely pebble: and the purest gold,
> Unsifted, may be fraught with sandy soil:
> —Twice wedded, the third rite did yet remain,
> To make their fragrant name the boast of ages!

Not long afterwards, two of the attendants returned with the empress's reply, declaring that her majesty, with the ladies of the palace, had proved beyond all question the innocence and virtue of Shueypingsin; with whom the empress was so pleased, that she had detained her to an entertainment, and returned this report in the mean while.

The emperor rejoiced at what he heard, and turning to his counsellors:—"They had already," said his majesty, "with their parents' sanction, twice celebrated the nuptial festival; but out of regard to their honour and reputation, and to do credit to the great cause of morality and virtue, they still remained apart. The innocence of their former acquaintance of five days is now indisputably proved;—this truly is the most unrivalled of FORTUNATE UNIONS! Had we listened to floating

* Leanghoong and Mengkwong.

floating calumnies, and forborne ourself to interrogate them, what a lasting injury to such uncommon excellence!"

The minister Kwoloongtung was then commanded to approach. "Notwithstanding your high station," said the emperor, "you brought up your son so ill, as to occasion those three violent attempts to possess himself of Shueypingsin: and unless her admirable understanding and address had enabled her to foil him, her disgrace and ruin had been inevitable. Such violent and unprincipled conduct on his part shall not go unpunished. You yourself, too, slandered and vilified these worthy persons in such a manner, as had well nigh caused the purity of the gem to receive a stain:—and, not content with this, endeavoured to bribe a public officer in the discharge of his duty. These are crimes of the highest degree."

At this just rebuke from the son of heaven, the minister's fright and trepidation deprived him of all power of defence. Prostrate on the earth, he divested himself of his cap of ceremony,* and could plead nothing in extenuation but his ignorance of the extraordinary virtue and excellence of this young couple, by which he had been led so unworthily to slander them.

The guilty member of the Censorate was next summoned.

* A mark of the greatest humility and self-abasement seems to be this self-privation of one of the principal distinctions of rank.

moned. "Your office," said the emperor, "required you to bring real delinquencies to light, and to act on our behalf as a guardian and promoter of virtue; instead of which you listened to the floating rumours in your path, and unjustly accused persons who were truly noble and upright. What a wound should we have inflicted on the great cause of virtue, by listening unadvisedly to your accusations!" The terror which the culprit experienced at this reprimand threw him into a profuse sweat, and he was content to lie prostrate, with his forehead to the ground.

It was with high satisfaction that his majesty then called for the new magistate, and commended him. "Your conduct on first entering office, thus boldly to speak out in the cause of right—thus fearlessly to tell the truth in spite of all the weight of authority and rank has afforded us real gratification." The imperial council were then commanded to draw out a notification of the emperor's decision regarding the several parties, to this effect.

"We know that the relative duties are most honoured by a strict observance, especially under circumstances of difficulty:—that the excellence of virtue lies in continuing inflexible, particularly when secrecy affords impunity.

"Shueypingsin, an unprotected female, thrice calmly defeated her violent enemies,—an extraordinary instance of merit. She gratefully protected her deliverer

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in his peril, and braved calumny without hesitation for his sake, displaying an intelligence and decision which are not to be rivalled. The most unrivalled part of her conduct, however, was after the celebration of the marriage ceremonies, still to remain in her maiden state, from a regard to her future honour: this was setting an example of saint-like virtue!—Teihchungyu, in delivering his victims from the tiger's den, and in discovering the leader's merits at a period so critical, discovered a noble resolution, the gift of heaven alone. Then he rescued Shueypingsin, as though she had been his nearest relation;—while he lived in her house with all the respect and reserve of a guest. In their intercourse, they made the expression of their mutual friendship and esteem compatible with the observance of every decorum:—they followed the impulse of their minds, without relinquishing virtue and propriety. Lastly, by his self-denial after marriage, he proved still more his firmness under trial.

"The espousal of the noble Teihchungyu to the chaste Shueypingsin may truly be entitled the FORTUNATE UNION of heroism and virtue! It affords us the highest satisfaction. We raise Teihchungyu to the dignity of a counsellor of state, and confer on Shueypingsin the rank of a lady of the empire. We bestow on them the imperial gift of a hundred taëls of fine gold, and a hundred rolls of embroidered silk, with ten

ten ceremonial habits, and a head-dress of ceremony each. Attended by our own music, lanterns, and banners, let them return home, and again celebrate their marriage, as the glorious triumph of virtue.

" Shueykeuyih and Teihying are each promoted a step on account of the merits of their children, and as a reward for uniting in marriage persons so worthy of each other. The new magistrate, who examined so conscientiously, reported so truly, and displayed such unbending integrity, will receive an especial appointment at the expiration of his present office. Paoutsze, the former magistrate, has highly gratified us by the fulness and clearness of his report, and by his regard for true merit.

" Kwoloongtung, in return for allowing his son to injure worthy persons, deserves severe marks of our displeasure; but in consideration of his long services, we are contented to degrade him three steps. Wongih, as the punishment of his false representation, is amerced in half a year's salary. Kwoketsu, who thrice endeavoured to effect a violent espousal, and once sought the life of his rival—though the attempt was unsuccessful, has displayed a detestable disposition. Let him receive, in the criminal court of his district, one hundred blows as some chastisement for his misdeeds.—Alas! if virtue were not distinguished, where would be the examples for mankind?—If vice escaped punishment, where would be the efficacy

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of the laws? We act for the general good—let all observe and obey. A special edict."

Shueypingsin had, in the meanwhile, been loaded by the bounty of the empress with a profusion of jewels and ornaments; and her four attendants were at length directed to conduct her back to his majesty's presence. The emperor beheld her with increased satisfaction. "We have had abundant instances," said he, "of maidens who preferred remaining as they were, to being contracted in marriage; but never of so excellent a pair as this, who, though so mutually fond, and already espoused in form, were determined to live apart rather than become the subjects of calumny and detraction. This has been a height and degree of virtue peculiar to yourselves. Your union is this day to be celebrated anew, in the sight of the whole empire, and reflects increased lustre on the great cause of virtue. Proceed home now, and continue as heretofore to illustrate by your conduct the character and morals of our reign."

Teihchungyu, his bride, and all the assembled court, then bowed down and acknowleged the imperial bounty—and the hum of joy and gratulation resembled the distant roll of thunder. The imperial attendants had received their orders; and as they filed off in pairs, the ornamented lanterns in all their radiance—the harmonious band in full sound—and the marshalled banners in their variegated splendour

—escorted

—escorted the renowned and happy couple, as they proceeded homewards attended by a vast company.

> The choicest bud, unblown, exhales no sweets,
> —No radiance can the untried gem display:
> Misfortune, like the winter cold that binds
> The embryo fragrance of the flow'r, doth lend
> A fresher charm to fair prosperity!

The young couple, on their arrival at home, first paid their adoration to the supreme powers of heaven and earth; they then erected an altar of incense, and betokened their gratitude for the imperial favours; after which they proceeded to pay the due honours to their parents, and to celebrate their nuptials for the third time.—This last occasion, so eminently honoured by the emperor's express command, was the theme of loud and universal admiration among the whole court, who dwelt on the virtues and merits of the distinguished pair.

The degraded minister, urged to the extremity of shame and rage at his own misfortune, and at the punishment of his son, wreaked his vengeance on Chingkee, their ill-adviser, whom he persecuted to the utmost. His friend, too, the member of the censorate, was exceedingly annoyed by the forfeiture of his emoluments. Shueyun, a fish that by good luck had slipped out of the net, was nevertheless thrown by his excessive fright into a violent illness, during which he had leisure to repent his misdeeds, and to

feel grateful for the clemency of his brother and his niece, whom he never again offended.

As for the eunuch, he took a lesson from this signal instance of the emperor's justice and impartiality, to abandon for the future his corrupt and hazardous practices.

> Vain were their wily plottings, nor matur'd
> Aught, but their authors' misery—Unwise!
> That with a worthier course might have compell'd
> Men to respect, and demons to forbear!

The conduct of Teihchungyu and his bride being thus publicly vindicated, and proved to be unsullied as the gem, and clear as ice, their joy on the occasion of their final nuptials was unalloyed by repentance or sorrow. They partook together of the nuptial feast, which was spread in the bridal apartments, and expressed to each other their mutual obligations:—Teihchungyu thanking his bride for the prudence by which she had confuted all the slanders of their enemies; and she, in like manner, thanking her husband for the firmness with which he had promoted their joint views. When the entertainment was concluded, their female attendants left them to themselves in their splendidly decorated chamber—the bridegroom brilliant as a gem—the bride lovely as a flower—and both of them at the height of their wishes. The following verses have been composed in their praise:—

> The bridal thrice repeated, they became
> Wedded at last, and through them were display'd

The social duties in each varied form!
Integrity was theirs, and well-placed trust:
Their secret confidence had none partaken:
Virtue had been their silken bond of union,
And natural sense of fitness well supplied
Th' absence of forms conventional—Say not
Through them the sacred cause but once did shine—
It gather'd lustre for a thousand years!

Their virtuous and admirable course of life, subsequent to marriage, corresponded with their character; and each action was worthy of being transmitted to the world in a second work—but here the present narrative must conclude.

END OF THE ROMANCE.

THE

SORROWS OF HĀN:

CHINESE TRAGEDY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following Drama was selected from the "Hundred Plays of Yuen," which has already supplied to Europe two specimens of the Chinese stage—the first, called the "Orphan of Chaou," translated by Père Premare; and the second entitled an "Heir in Old Age," by the author of the present version. The "Sorrows of Hăn" is historical, and relates to one of the most interesting periods of the Chinese annals, when the growing effeminacy of the court, and consequent weakness of the government, emboldened the Tartars in their aggressions, and first gave rise to the temporising and impolitic system of propitiating those barbarians by tribute, which long after produced the downfall of the empire, and the establishment of the Mongol dominion.

The moral of the piece is evidently to expose the evil consequences of luxury, effeminacy, and supineness in the sovereign,

> "When love was all an easy monarch's care,
> Seldom at council—never in a war."

The hero, or rather the chief personage, of the drama, came to the throne very near the beginning of the Christian era, about B.C. 42. The fate of the Lady Chaoukeun is a favourite

vourite incident in history, of which painters, poets, and romancers, frequently avail themselves: her "Verdant Tomb" is said to exist at the present day, and to remain green all the year round, while the vegetation of the desert in which it stands is parched by the summer sun.

In selecting this single specimen from among so many, the translator was influenced by the consideration of its remarkable accordance with our own canons of criticism. The Chinese themselves make no regular classification of comedy and tragedy; but we are quite at liberty to give the latter title to a play, which so completely answers to the European definition. The unity of action is complete, and the unities of time and place much less violated than they frequently are on our own stage. The grandeur and gravity of the subject, the rank and dignity of the personages, the tragical catastrophe, and the strict award of poetical justice, might satisfy the most rigid admirer of Grecian rules. The translator has thought it necessary to adhere to the original in distinguishing by name the first act (or Proëm) from the four which follow it: but the distinction is purely nominal, and the piece consists, to all intents and purposes, of *five* acts. It is remarkable, that this peculiar division holds true with regard to a large number of the "Hundred Plays of Yuen."

The reader will doubtless be struck by the apparent shortness of the drama which is here presented to him: but the original is eked out, in common with all Chinese plays, by an irregular operatic species of song, which the principal character occasionally chaunts forth in unison with a louder

or

or a softer accompaniment of music, as may best suit the sentiment or action of the moment. Some passages have been embodied in our version: but the translator did not give *all*, for the same reasons that prompted Père Premare to give *none*—"they are full of allusions to things unfamiliar to us, and figures of speech very difficult for us to observe."—They are frequently, moreover, mere repetitions or amplifications of the prose parts; and being intended more for the ear than for the eye, are rather adapted to the stage than to the closet.

His judgment may perhaps be swayed by partiality towards the subject of his own labours; but the translator cannot help thinking the plot and incidents of the "Sorrows of Hän" superior to those of the "Orphan of Chaou"—though the genius of Voltaire contrived to make the last the groundwork of an excellent French tragedy. Far is he, however, from entertaining the presumptuous expectation that a destiny of equal splendour awaits the present drama: and he will be quite satisfied if the reader has patience to read it to the end, and then pronounces it to be a somewhat curious sample of a very foreign literature.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

YUENTE ..... *Emperor of China (of the Dynasty Hān).*

HANCHENYU ..... *K'han of the Tartars.*

MAOUYENSHOW ..... *A worthless Minister of the Emperor.*

SHANGSHOO (*a title*) ..... *President of the Imperial Council.*

CHANGSHE (*ditto*) ..... *Officer in waiting.*

FANSHE (*ditto*) ..... *Envoy of the K'han.*

CHAOUKEUN ..... *Lady, raised to be Princess of Hān.*

Tartar Soldiers, Female Attendants, Eunuchs, &c.

The Scene lies in the Tartar Camp, on the Frontiers; and in the Palace of Hān.

THE

SORROWS OF HĀN.*

PROËM.

Enter K'HAN† OF THE TARTARS, *reciting four verses.*

K'HAN. "The autumnal gale blows wildly through the grass, amidst our woollen tents,
And the moon of night, shining on the rude huts, hears the lament of the mournful pipe:
The countless hosts, with their bended bows, obey me as their leader;
Our tribes are the distinguished friends of the family of Hān."

I am Hanchenyu, the old inhabitant of the sandy waste; the sole ruler of the northern regions. The wild chace is our trade; battle and conquest our chief occupation. The Emperor Wunwong retired before our eastern tribes; Weikeang trembled at us, and sued for our

* HAN KOONG TSEW, literally, 'Autumn in the Palace of Hān;' but in Chinese, Autumn is emblematic of sorrow, as Spring is of joy, and may therefore be rendered by what it represents.

† In Chinese, Ko-han.

our friendship. The ancient title of our chiefs has in the course of time been changed to that which I now bear. When the two races of Tsin and Hān contended in battle, and filled the empire with tumult, our tribes were in full power: numberless was the host of armed warriors, with their bended bows. For seven days my ancestor hemmed in with his forces the Emperor Kaoute; until, by the contrivance of the minister, a treaty was concluded, and the Princesses of China were yielded in marriage to our K'hans.* Since the time of Hoeyte and the Empress Leuhow,† each successive generation has adhered to the established rule, and sought our alliance with its daughters. In the reign of the late Emperor Seuente, my brothers contended with myself for the rule of our nation, and its power was weakened until the tribes elected me as their chief. I am a real descendant of the empire of Hān.—I command a hundred thousand armed warriors. We have moved to the south, and approached the border, claiming an alliance with the Imperial race. Yesterday, I despatched an envoy with tributary presents, to demand a princess in marriage; but know not if the Emperor will ratify the engagement with the customary oaths. The fineness of the season has drawn away our chiefs on a hunting excursion amidst the sandy steppes. May they meet with

* See Memoir concerning the Chinese, vol. i. p. 7, *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society.*

† The mother of Hoeyte, a bold and able woman, who ruled for her son, the second emperor of Hān.

with success, for we Tartars have no fields—our bows and arrows are our sole means of subsistence. (*Exit.*)

Enter MINISTER OF HAN, *reciting verses.*

MINISTER.—" Let a man have the heart of a kite, and the talons of an eagle,
Let him deceive his superiors, and oppress those below him;
Let him enlist flattery, insinuation, profligacy, and avarice on his side,
And he will find them a lasting assistance through life."

I am no other than Maouyenshow, a minister of the sovereign of Hān. By a hundred arts of specious flattery and address I have deceived the Emperor, until he places his whole delight in me alone. My words he listens to; and he follows my counsel. Within the precincts of the palace, as without them, who is there but bows before me—who is there but trembles at my approach? But observe the chief art which I have learned:—it is this; to persuade the Emperor to keep aloof from his wise counsellors, and seek all his pleasures amidst the women of his palace. Thus it is that I strengthen my power and greatness. But, in the midst of my lucubrations, here comes the Emperor.

Enter EMPEROR YUENTE *attended by Eunuchs and Women.*

EMPEROR. (*Recites verses.*)—

" During the ten generations that have succeeded our acquisition of empire,
My race has alone possessed the four hundred districts of the world:
Long have the frontiers been bound in tranquillity by the ties of mutual oaths,
And our pillow has been undisturbed by grief or anxiety."

Behold in us the Emperor Yuente, of the race of Hān Our ancestor Kaoute emerged from a private station, and raised his family by extinguishing the dynasty of Tsin, and slaughtering their race. Ten generations have passed away since he left this inheritance to us. The four boundaries of the empire have been tranquil: the eight regions at rest! But not through our personal merits; we have wholly depended on the exertions of our civil and military rulers. On the demise of our late father, the female inmates of the palace were all dispersed, and our haram * is now solitary and untenanted; but how shall this be endured!

MIN.—Consider, sir, that even the thriving husbandman may desire to change his partner; then, why not your Majesty, whose title is the Son of Heaven, whose possessions are the whole world! May I advise, that commissioners

* *Nuykoong*, or *Howkoong*.

commissioners be despatched to search throughout the empire for all, of whatever rank, that is most beautiful between the ages of fifteen and twenty, for the peopling of the inner palace.

EMP.—You say well. We appoint you at once our minister of selection, and will invest you with a written authority. Search diligently through our realms; and when you have selected the most worthy, let us be provided with portraits of each, as a means of fixing our choice. By the merits of your services, you may supply us with an occasion of rewarding you on your return. (*Exeunt.*)

ACT I.

Enter MINISTER.

MIN. (*Repeats verses.*)—

"The huge ingots of yellow gold I appropriate to myself,
I heed not the seas of blood which flow by perverting the laws:
During life I am determined to have abundance of riches;
What care I for the curses of mankind after my death?"

Having received the Emperor's commission to search far and wide for the most beautiful damsels, I have fixed upon ninety-nine. Their families were glad to invite my selection by rich gifts, and the treasure that I have amassed is not small. On arriving yesterday at a district pertaining to Chingtoo city, I met with a maiden, daughter of one Wongchang. The brightness of her charms was piercing as an arrow! She was perfectly beautiful—and doubtless unparalleled in the whole empire. But, unfortunately, her father is a cultivator of the land, not possessed of much wealth. When I insisted on a hundred ounces of gold to secure her being the chief object of the imperial choice, they first pleaded their poverty,—and then, relying on her extraordinary beauty, rejected my offers altogether. I therefore left them.—(*Considers awhile.*) But no!—I have a better plan.

plan. (*He knits his brows and matures his scheme.*) I will disfigure her portrait in such manner, that when it reaches the Emperor it shall secure her being doomed to neglected seclusion.—Thus I shall contrive to make her unhappy for life—Base is the man who delights not in revenge! (*Exit.*)

Night.—Enter the LADY CHAOUKEUN, *with two female Attendants.*

CHAOU. (*Recites verses.*)—

" Though raised to be an inhabitant of the imperial dwelling,
I have been long here without the good fortune to see my prince:
This beautiful night must I pass in lonely solitude,
With no companion but my lute to solace my retirement."

I am a native of Chingtoo city; and my father's occupation is husbandry. My mother dreamed on the day I was born that the light of the moon shone on her bosom, but was soon cast low to the earth.* I was just eighteen years of age when chosen as an inhabitant of the imperial palace; but the minister Maouyenshow, disappointed in the treasure which he demanded on my account, disfigured my portrait in such manner as to keep me out of the Emperor's presence; and I now live in neglected solitude. While at home, I learned a little

* Boding a short, but fatal distinction to her offspring

music, and could play a few airs on the lute. Thus sorrowing in the stillness of midnight, let me practise one of my songs to dispel my griefs. (*Begins to play on the lute.*)*

Enter EMPEROR, *attended by a Eunuch carrying a light.*

EMPEROR.—Since the beauties were selected to grace our palace, we have not yet discovered a worthy object on whom to fix our preference. Vexed and disappointed, we pass this day of leisure roaming in search of her who may be destined for our imperial choice. (*Hears the lute.*) Is not that some lady's lute?

ATTENDANT.—It is. I hasten to advise her of your Majesty's approach.

EMP.—No, hold! Keeper of the yellow gate, discover to what part of our palace that lady pertains; and bid her approach our presence: but beware lest you alarm her.

ATTEND.—(*Approaches in the direction of the sound, and speaks.*) What lady plays there? The Emperor comes: approach to meet him. (*Lady advances.*)

EMP.—Keeper of the yellow gate, see that the light burns brightly within your gauze† lamp, and hold it nearer to us.

LADY.—(*Approaching.*) Had your handmaid but known

* The notes within brackets are the same in the original version.

† Instead of glass, to defend it from the wind.

known it was your Majesty, she would have been less tardy; forgive, then, this delay!

EMP.—Truly this is a very perfect beauty! From what quarter come such superior charms?

LADY.—My name is Chaoukeun: my father cultivates at Chingtoo the fields which he has derived from his family.—Born in an humble station, I am ignorant of the manners that befit a palace.

EMP.—But with such uncommon attractions, what chance has kept you from our sight?

LADY.—When I was chosen by the minister Maouyenshow, he demanded of my father an amount of treasure which our poverty could not supply: he therefore disfigured my portrait, by representing a scar under the eyes, and caused me to be consigned to seclusion and neglect.

EMP.—Keeper of the yellow gate, bring us that picture, that we may view it. (*Sees the picture.*) "Ah, how has he dimmed the purity of the gem, bright as the waves in autumn!"* (*To the attendant.*) Transmit our pleasure to the officer of the guard, to behead Maouyenshow, and report to us his execution.

LADY.—My parents, Sir, are subject to the tax† in our native district. Let me entreat your Majesty to

 remit

* The passages with inverted commas are selected from the musical portion.

† The principal taxes in China are, the land-tax, customs, salt monopoly, and personal service; which last is the source of much oppression to the lowest orders, who have nothing but their labour to contribute.

remit their contributions and extend favour towards them!

EMP.—That shall readily be done. Approach and hear our imperial pleasure—We create you a Princess of our palace.

LADY.—How unworthy is your handmaid of such gracious distinction! (*Goes through the form of returning thanks.*) Early to-morrow I attend your Majesty's commands in this place.—The Emperor is gone: let the attendants close the doors:—I will retire to rest. (*Exit.*)

ACT II.

Enter K'HAN OF THE TARTARS, *at the head of his Tribes.*

K'HAN.—I lately sent an envoy to the sovereign of Hān, with the demand of a princess in marriage: but the Emperor has returned a refusal, under the plea that the princess is yet too young. This answer gives me great trouble.—Had he not plenty of ladies in his palace, of whom he might have sent me one? The difference was of little consequence.* Let me recall my envoy with all speed, for I must invade the south with our forces.—And yet I am unwilling to break a truce of so many years' standing! We must see how matters turn out, and be guided by the event.

Enter MINISTER OF HAN.

MIN. The severity with which I extorted money, in the selection of beauties for the palace, led me to disfigure the picture of Chaoukeun, and consign her thereby to neglected seclusion. But the Emperor fell in with her, obtained from her the truth, and condemned me to lose my head. I contrived to make my escape—though I have now no home to receive me. I will take this true portrait of Chaoukeun, and show it to the Tartar K'han, persuading him to demand her from the Emperor, who will no doubt be obliged to yield her up.

* The honour of the imperial alliance being the chief object.

up. A long journey has brought me to this spot, and from the troops of men and horses I conclude I have reached the Tartar camp.—(*Addresses himself to somebody.*) Leader, inform king Hanchenyu, that a great minister of the empire of Hān is come to wait on him.

K'HAN. (*On being informed.*)—Command him to approach. (*Seeing Maouyenshow.*) What person are you?

MIN.—I am a minister of Hān. In the western palace of the Emperor is a lady, named Chaoukeun, of rare and surpassing charms. When your envoy, great king, came to demand a princess, this lady would have answered the summons; but the Emperor of Hān could not bring himself to part with her, and refused to yield her up. I repeatedly renewed my bitter reproaches, and asked how he could bear, for the sake of a woman's beauty, to implicate the welfare of two nations. For this the Emperor would have beheaded me; and I therefore escaped with the portrait of the lady, which I present, great king, to yourself. Should you send away an envoy with the picture to demand her, she must certainly be delivered up. Here is the portrait. (*Hands it up.*)

K'HAN.—Whence could so beautiful a female have appeared in the world! If I can only obtain her, my wishes are complete. Immediately shall an envoy be despatched, and my ministers prepare a letter to the Emperor of Hān, demanding her in marriage as the condition of peace. Should he refuse, I will presently invade

invade the south: his hills and rivers shall be exposed to ravage. Our warriors will commence by hunting, as they proceed on their way; and thus gradually entering the frontiers, I shall be ready to act as may best suit the occasion. (*Exit.*)

Palace of Hān. Enter LADY, *attended by females.*

PRIN.—A long period has elapsed since I had to thank his Majesty for his choice. The Emperor's fondness for me is so great, that he has still neglected to hold a court. I hear he is now gone to the hall of audience, and will therefore ornament myself at my toilet, and be adorned and prepared to wait on him at his return. (*Stands opposite to a mirror.**)

Enter EMPEROR.

EMP.—Since we first met with Chaoukeun in the western palace, we have been as it were deranged and intoxicated: a long interval has elapsed since we held a court; and on entering the hall of audience this day, we waited not until the assembly had dispersed, but returned hither to obtain a sight of her. (*Perceiving the Princess.*) Let us not alarm her, but observe in secret what she is doing. (*Comes close behind, and looks over her.*) "Reflected in that round mirror, she resembles the Lady in the Moon."†

Enter

* The proper Chinese mirror is of metal, and circular.—*Vide infra.*

† The passages marked with inverted commas are retained from the operatic

Enter PRESIDENT, *and an Officer in waiting.*

PRESIDENT. (*Recites verses.*)—

" Ministers should devote themselves to the regulation of the empire ;
They should be occupied with public cares in the hall of government :
But they do nought but attend at the banquets in the palace :
When have they employed a single day in the service of their prince ?"

This day, when the audience was concluded, an envoy arrived from the Tartars to demand Chaoukeun in marriage, as the only condition of peace. It is my duty to report this to his Majesty, who has retired to his western palace. Here I must enter. (*Perceiving the Emperor.*) I report to your Majesty that Hanchenyu, the leader of the northern foreigners, sends an envoy to declare that Maouyenshow has presented to him the portrait of the princess, and that he demands her in marriage as the only condition of peace. If refused, he will invade the south with a great power, and our rivers and hills will be exposed to rapine.

EMP.—In vain do we maintain and send forth armies : vain are the crowds of civil and military officers about our palace ! Which of them will drive back for

us

operatic portion of the drama, or that which is *sung*. Changngo, the goddess of the moon, gives her name to the finely curved eyebrows (*Ngomei*) of the Chinese ladies, which are compared to the lunar crescent when only a day or two old.

us these foreign troops? They are all afraid of the Tartar swords and arrows! But if they cannot exert themselves to expel the barbarians, why call for the princess to propitiate them?

PRESID.—The foreigners say that through your Majesty's devoted fondness for the princess, the affairs of your empire are falling into ruin. They declare that if the government does not yield her up, they will put their army in motion, and subdue the country. Your servant reflects, that Chow-wong,* who lost his empire and life entirely through his blind devotion to Tăkee, is a fit example to warn your Majesty. Our army is weak, and needs the talents of a fit general. Should we oppose the Tartars, and be defeated, what will remain to us? Let your Majesty give up your fondness for the princess, to save your people.

OFF.—The envoy waits without for an audience.

EMP.—Well; command that he approach us.

Enter ENVOY.

ENVOY.—Hanchenyu, K'han of the Tartars, sends me, his minister, to state before the great Sovereign of Hān, that the northern tribes and the southern empire have long been bound in peace by mutual alliances; but that envoys being twice sent to demand a princess, his requisitions

* *Chow-wong* was the last of the Shang dynasty, and infamous by his debaucheries and cruelties, in concert with his empress *Tăkee*, the Theodora of Chinese history. See vol. i. p. 4, Note.

requisitions have been refused. The late minister, Maouyenshow, took with him the portrait of a beautiful lady, and presented it to the K'han, who now sends me, his envoy, on purpose to demand the Lady Chaoukeun, and no other, as the only condition of peace between the two nations. Should your Majesty refuse, the K'han has a countless army of brave warriors, and will forthwith invade the south to try the chances of war. I trust your Majesty will not err in your decision.

EMP.—The envoy may retire to repose himself in his lodging. (*Exit the envoy.*) Let our civil and military officers consult, and report to us the best mode of causing the foreign troops to retire, without yielding up the princess to propitiate them. They take advantage of the compliant softness of her temper. Were the Empress Leuhow alive—let her utter a word,—which of them would dare to be of a different opinion?—It would seem that, for the future, instead of men for ministers, we need only have fair women to keep our empire in peace!

PRIN.—In return for your Majesty's bounties, it is your handmaid's duty to brave death to serve you. I can cheerfully enter into this foreign alliance, for the sake of producing peace, and shall leave behind me a name still green in history.—But my affection for your Majesty, how am I to lay aside!

EMP.

EMP.—Alas, I* know too well that I can do no more than yourself!

PRESID.—I entreat your Majesty to sacrifice your love, and think of the security of your Dynasty.† Hasten, Sir, to send the princess on her way!

EMP.—Let her this day advance a stage on her journey, and be presented to the envoy.—To-morrow we will repair as far as the bridge of Pāhling, and give her a parting feast.

PRESID.—Alas! Sir, this may not be! It will draw on us the contempt of these barbarians.

EMP.—We have complied with all our minister's propositions—shall they not, then, accede to ours? Be it as it may, we will witness her departure—and then return home to hate the traitor Maouyenshow!

PRESID.—Unwillingly we advise that the princess be sacrificed for the sake of peace: but the envoy is instructed to insist upon her alone—and from ancient times, how often hath the nation suffered for a woman's beauty!

PRIN.—Though I go into exile for the nation's good, yet ill can I bear to part from your Majesty! (*Exeunt.*)

* The imperial pronoun 'Tchin,' *we*, is with very good taste supplied by *I* in these impassioned passages.

† Literally, 'the gods of the land and grain,' who grant their territory to a particular family.

ACT III.

Enter ENVOY, *escorting the* PRINCESS, *with a band of music.*

PRIN.—Thus was I, in spite of the treachery of Maouyenshow, who disfigured my portrait, seen and exalted by his Majesty: but the traitor presented a truer likeness to the Tartar king, who comes at the head of an army to demand me, with a threat of seizing the country. There is no remedy—I must be yielded up to propitiate the invaders! How shall I bear the rigours—the winds and frosts of that foreign land! It has been said of old, that "surpassing beauty* is often coupled with an unhappy fate." Let me grieve, then, without entertaining fruitless resentment at the effects of my own attractions.

Enter EMPEROR, *attended by his several officers.*

EMP.—This day we take leave of the princess at Pāhling bridge! (*To his ministers.*) Can ye not yet devise a way to send out these foreign troops, without yielding up the princess for the sake of peace? (*Descends from his horse, and appears to grieve with Chaoukeun.*) Let our attendants delay awhile, till we have conferred the parting cup.

ENVOY.

This is a very old sentiment, out of China:

"Sed vetat optari faciem Lucretia qualem
Ipsa habuit: cuperet Rutilæ Virginia gibbum
Accipere, atque suam Rutilæ dare."

ENVOY.—Lady, let us urge you to proceed on your way—the sky darkens, and night is coming on.

PRIN.—Alas! when shall I again behold your Majesty? I will take off my robes of distinction and leave them behind me. To-day in the palace of Hān—to-morrow I shall be espoused to a stranger. I cease to wear these splendid vestments—they shall no longer adorn my beauty in the eyes of men!

ENVOY.—Again let us urge you, princess, to depart; we have delayed but too long already!

EMP.—'Tis done!—Princess, when you are gone, let your thoughts forbear to dwell with sorrow and resentment upon us! (*They part.*)—And am I the great Monarch of the line of Hān?*

PRESID.—Let your Majesty cease to dwell with such grief upon this subject!

EMP.—"She is gone! In vain have we maintained those armed heroes on the frontier.† Mention but swords and spears, and they tremble at their hearts like a young deer. The princess has this day performed what belonged to themselves: and yet do they affect the semblance of men!"

PRESID.—Your Majesty is entreated to return to the

* "Lie there, thou *shadow of an emperor!*"—Mark Anthony.

† It may be observed, that the great wall is never once expressly mentioned through this drama. The expression used is *pëensïh*, the border, or frontier. The wall had existed two hundred years at this time, but the real frontier was beyond it.

the palace: dwell not so bitterly, Sir, on her memory: —allow her to depart!

EMP.—"Did I not think of her, I had a heart of iron—a heart of iron! The tears of my grief stream in a thousand channels. This evening shall her likeness be suspended in the palace, where I will sacrifice to it—and tapers with their silvery light shall illuminate her chamber."

PRESID.—Let your Majesty return to the palace—the princess is already far distant! (*Exeunt.*)

The Tartar Camp. Enter K'HAN *at the head of his tribes, leading in the Princess.*

K'HAN.—The Emperor of Hān having now, in observance of old treaties, yielded up to me the Lady Chaoukeun in marriage, I take her as my rightful queen. The two nations shall enjoy the benefits of peace. (*To his generals.*) Leaders, transmit my commands to the army to strike our encampment, and proceed to the north. (*They march.*)

The river Amoor. Tartar army on its march.*

PRIN.—What place is this?

ENVOY.—It is the River of the Black Dragon, the frontier of the Tartar territories and those of China. This southern shore is the Emperor's: on the northern side commences our Tartar dominion.

PRIN.

* Or Saghalien, which falls into the sea of Ochotsk.

PRIN.—(*To the K'han.*) Great King, I take a cup of wine, and pour a libation towards the south—my last farewell to the Emperor (*pours the libation.*) Emperor of Hān, this life is finished.—I await thee in the next! (*Throws herself into the river.*)

The K'HAN, *in great consternation, endeavours to save her, but in vain.*

K'HAN.—Alas! alas!—so determined was her purpose against this foreign alliance—she has thrown herself into the stream, and perished! 'Tis done,. and remediless! Let her sepulchre be on this river's bank, and be it called "the verdant tomb."* She is no more; and vain has been our enmity with the dynasty of Hān! The traitor Maouyenshow was the author of all this misery. (*To an officer.*) Take Maouyenshow, and let him be delivered over to the Emperor for punishment. I will return to our former friendship with the dynasty of Hān. We will renew and long preserve the sentiments of relationship. The traitor disfigured the portrait to injure Chaoukeun—then deserted his sovereign, and stole over to me, whom he prevailed on to demand the lady in marriage. How little did I think that she would thus precipitate herself into the stream, and perish!—In vain did my spirit melt at the sight of her! But if I detained this profligate and traitorous rebel, he would certainly prove to us a root of misfortune:

* Said to exist now, and to be green all round the year.

tune:—it is better to deliver him for his reward to the Emperor of Hān, with whom I will renew, and long retain, our old feelings of relationship and amity.

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT IV.

Enter EMPEROR, *with an Attendant.*

EMP.—Since the princess was yielded to the Tartars, we have not held an audience. The lonely silence of night but increases our melancholy! We take the picture of that fair-one and suspend it here, as some small solace to our griefs. (*To the Attendant.*) Keeper of the yellow gate, behold, the incense in yonder vase is burnt out: hasten then to add some more. "Though we cannot see her, we may at least retain this shadow; and, while life remains, betoken our regard." But oppressed and weary, we would fain take a little repose. (*Lies down to sleep.*)

*The Princess appears before him in a vision.**

PRIN.—Delivered over as a captive to appease the barbarians, they would have conveyed me to their northern country: but I took an occasion to elude them, and have escaped back. Is not this the Emperor, my sovereign? Sir, behold me again restored. (*A Tartar soldier appears in the vision.*)

SOLD.—While I chanced to sleep, the lady, our captive, has made her escape, and returned home. In eager pursuit of her, I have reached the imperial palace. —Is not this she?—(*Carries her off.*)

* There is nothing in this more extravagant than the similar vision in the tragedy of Richard III.

The Emperor starts from his sleep.

EMP.—We just saw the princess returned—but alas, how quickly has she vanished! "In bright day she answered not to our call—but when morning dawned on our troubled sleep, a vision presented her in this spot." (*Hears the wild-fowl's* cry*) "Hark, the passing fowl screamed twice or thrice!—Can it know there is one so desolate as I?" (*Cries repeated.*) "Perhaps worn out and weak, hungry and emaciated, they bewail at once the broad nets of the south and the tough bows of the north." (*Cries repeated.*) The screams of those water-birds but increase our melancholy.

ATTEND.—Let your Majesty cease this sorrow, and have some regard to your sacred† person.

EMP.—My sorrows are beyond control. "Cease to upbraid this excess of feeling, since ye are all subject to the same. Yon doleful cry is not the note of the swallow on the carved rafters, nor the song of the variegated bird upon the blossoming tree. The princess has abandoned her home! Know ye in what place she grieves, listening like me to the screams of the wild bird?"

Enter

* Yengo, a species of wild goose, (as well as the Yuenyang, *anas nobilis*,) is the emblem in China of intersexual attachment and fidelity, being said never to pair again after the loss of its mate. An image of it is worshipped by newly-married couples. Inhabiting the northern regions during summer, these birds migrate in winter towards the southern extremes.

† *Loongte*, literally 'dragon person.' The emperor's throne is called the 'dragon seat.'

Enter PRESIDENT.

PRESID.—This day, after the close of the morning council, a foreign envoy appeared, bringing with him the fettered traitor Maouyenshow. He announces that the renegade, by deserting his allegiance, led to the breach of truce, and occasioned all these calamities. The princess is no more! and the K'han wishes for peace and friendship between the two nations. The envoy attends, with reverence, your imperial decision.

EMP.—Then strike off the traitor's head, and be it presented as an offering to the shade of the princess! Let a fit banquet be got ready for the envoy, preparatory to his return. (*Recites these verses.*)

" At the fall of the leaf, when the wild-fowl's cry was heard in the recesses of the palace,
Sad dreams returned to our lonely pillow; we thought of her through the night:
Her verdant tomb remains—but where shall we seek herself?
The perfidious painter's head shall atone for the beauty which he wronged.'

END OF THE TRAGEDY.

APPENDIX

THE FORTUNATE UNION.

APPENDIX TO VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.—(Page 1.)

THOUGH broad those hills and rivers, beneath yon broad heaven;
—Though countless ages follow ages gone by;
As one generation of men succeeds to another,*
How few the heroes and worthies of our race!

* * * *

Sleeping or awake, he still seeks, still restlessly thinks of her,
With natural feeling,—who is there but loves 'arched brows'?
Were it not for the obstacles that distracted his thoughts,
Here were the example among mortals of a perfect union.†

(P. 5.)

To die for his prince is the proper duty of a faithful minister:
To mourn for his father completes the obligations of a pious son;
Though men's inclinations unite them in a hundred different ways,
The 'five relations' are after all the most important.

(P. 10.)

Let the crafty and wicked cease to boast the depth of their wisdom,
Who knows but detection may unexpectedly overtake them?
Friend, it is superfluous to attempt blinding men's eyes:
There is a heaven above, that exercises constant vigilance.

(P. 14.)

The heart in its trouble finds no place of rest,
The mind in its bitterness thinks only of grief:

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* The generations of men follow each other like waves in a swollen river.'—*See Chinese Maxims*, page 3.

† In the original, *Chang-suy* 'to sing and accompany,' is a phrase for marriage.

Say not that tears belong only to babes and women,
The bravest, struck by sorrow, will sometimes weep.

(P. 19.)

In every affair, to act with composure, is the character of courage;
When the time of exertion arrives, the resources of the mind are all required:
Were mere brute rage considered as the quality of a hero,
Real merit would not once in a thousand years acquire its due fame.

CHAPTER II.—(P. 26.)

In the affairs of the world, all declare that forms prescribed are the most essential;
But there are occasions when even these must be suspended:
Leying, who broke open the pillar, was considered wise;
Changkëen, who gave notice of his approach, was accounted good for nothing:
You must look for the hare near the wood, and in the grass;
Take a lesson from the birds of prey in seizing their game:
Know, that setting aside the ordinary rules and prescriptions,
There is a right of acting according to the changes of circumstance.

(P. 43.)

To explore the tiger's den belongs to the valour of the hero;
To trace the fox's flight, proves the sagacity of the experienced:
The restoration of the pearl to *Hŏpoo Hëen*
Proves, that once in a thousand years, there may be a *Leuhow*.

(P. 48.)

His coming was caused by anxiety for his father,
His departure was in order to escape from trouble:
Would you know the destinies connected with his movements,
—Heaven has not yet revealed them.

CHAPTER III.—(P. 49.)

All know that weakness is a woman's attribute.
Who knows that a woman may sometimes be wise and able:

By a single word, the lurking evil was lightly dispell'd;
By one turn, the flying mischief was quietly avoided:
Her excellent plans required not a sound, nor a signal;
In the time of action, every thing proved to be ably arranged:
She allowed them to precede her with their wily plots,
But when executed, they occasioned a too-late repentance.

(P. 49.)

In studying books it is requisite to close your door;
But to inquire after wisdom you must not decline travel:
After having explored every region of the empire,
You may arrive at duly informing the mind.

(P. 63.)

A speculation is often ruined through mere love of gain,
Men are stupified entirely by their avarice;
The richness of the scented-bait signified but little:
—Its efficacy depended on the greediness of the fish.

(P. 72.)

Though their wicked plots were cunningly laid,
They proved no match for her wisdom and prudence:
The power of the robber-bird availed but little,
For its intended victim had already shifted her nest.

CHAPTER IV.—(P. 76.)

The stupidity of some men is well deserving of laughter;
They are ignorant of what is immediately before their eyes:
When the spring-dream is over, they still brood over it;
When the autumn clouds are all dispersed, they still fancy them changing:
If heaven further not their designs, the acute must become dull;
The wild horse, ungoverned by a bridle, is little assisted by his speed.
Though their adventurous plots might deserve the name of daring,
They proved no match for the prudence of a secluded female.

(P. 82.)

The high road of reason is plain and straight,
The way of the wicked alone is crooked and devious:

Were there not occasional instances of virtue and self-government,
The great cause of morality must entirely fail.

(P. 87.)

Their awkward plots are like rolling a grinding stone—
Her intelligent mind is fixed as a rock.
—They first roll this way, and then roll that,
As they constantly shift their varied efforts.

(P. 89.)

The bounding ball is not far removed from the dragon's reach,
To beard the tiger you must approach very near his jaws:
—Thus was proved the value of superior intellect;
—Thus was shewn the worthlessness of the stupid blunderer.

(P. 93.)

Let not ordinary mortals wildly aspire to the possession of a goddess;
Let them know that the vengeful deity (*Makoo*) holds an iron scourge:
—Still he madly sought his advantage in the pursuit;
His mouth still watered for the prize in view.

(P. 96.)

The blossoming sprig is reflected in the mirror,
The shadowy moon in the water mocks the gazer's grasp:
Who could guess, when he had exhausted his efforts to seize the prize,
It would remain as intangible as the bright reflection in the wave!

CHAPTER V.—(Page 101.)

Having sought to inveigle and devour his prey, like the sea-monster, he next endeavoured to seize her like the robber-bird: so numerous are the vile attempts of the wicked: how should they know, that when destiny has decided against them, their best laid schemes must end in failure?——He sought her at her house with a happy device, but was presently crossed by opposition: thus enmities often arise from the narrowness of the way: but if not for the grass and tangle in the path, how could this excellent union have been brought about?

(P. 107.)

Before one villainy is completed, another begins;
How is it possible to obtain any peace in the world?
Say not that such difficulties might stumble a female,—
It would have puzzled one of the other sex to proceed on the occasion.

(P. 110.)

Her eyes beheld the fearful prodigies without fear;
Her ears heard the frightful thunder without fright:
Cease to say that she had fallen into men's deadly snares,—
She rescued her life from the hands of the very demons.

CHAPTER VI.—(Page 128.)

Since enmities are not easily forgotten, benefits should the more strictly be recompensed. The calumny that attached to her was the consequence of her blossom-like beauty. They knew not that the perfect gem can never be depreciated—though exposed to evil contact, it cannot be permanently stained.——The excellence of her nature had no bounds; her intelligent mind had its own secret resources. She proceeded independently in her course, without support or aid. Say not that Loonantszé, who lit the taper, was the only instance of virtue: for Lewheahoey, who resisted temptation, was no less real an example of morality.

(P. 143.)

Benefit was returned for benefit, kindness for kindness,
The gratitude on both sides was natural and sincere:
Had a single unworthy thought been entertained,
It would have proved the scandal of a thousand years.

(P. 143.)

The white bones had been inhumed—but the spirit still knit the grass,
The bird repaid its debt of gratitude by bringing in its bill the yellow flowers:*

* 'The spirit that knit the grass,' has reference to the story of a warrior who was assisted in his need by the ghost of one whose daughter he had saved from an untimely death.—'The bird that brought the yellow flowers,' to administer to the recovery of its preserver, is another common illustration of the virtue of gratitude.

The heroes and heroines who have been celebrated for their virtue,
Never forgot, even in the silence of night, to preserve a clear conscience.

CHAPTER VII.—(Page 153.)

Wonder not at this female with slender waist, and delicate hands,
Though her enemies expressed both rage and astonishment:
Her heart though warm was pure, her temper chaste as ice;
The candid advice she gave fell on his ear in honied words:
In the singleness of her purpose, she relied upon herself—
Unconscious of wrong, what need had she for distrust?
Were she called on to observe the three thousand punctualities,
The hero (the dragon) would have found no place of refuge from his enemies.

(P. 159.)

The azure heaven's light reaches not under the inverted bowl,
In the kitchen alone can be learned what goes on in the boiler:
—Condemn not his conduct in using a spy,
For otherwise, how could virtue and vice have been distinguished?

(P. 170.)

The white gem, unblemished, ranks as most precious,
The blue lily, without a spot, emits a rare fragrance:
Had she fallen like her, whose heart was touched by the lute,*
It might have formed a spirited tale, but the cause of virtue would have suffered.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Page 178.)

Unconnected by either stalk or root, they were distinct and independent,
Nought but their virtuous and heroic qualities united them:
Ordinary persons form a judgment by outward appearances,

---

* Wunkeun, or Chohwunkeun, was beloved by a youth named Szemă, who serenaded her on the stringed instrument *kin*, and induced her to quit her home for him.

But to emulate each other in noble daring is the part of the worthy.
At the evil sound of the wind and rain the flowers stop their ears,
At the near approach of the misty clouds the moon contracts her brows:
Would you fit a square handle to a round instrument?
—It is a scheme that has never yet succeeded.

(P. 186.)

He thought that his flattering words must prove agreeable,
He little knew they would turn to his own shame:
Had not heaven blest his face with a good callous skin,
How could it have endured the pain of such a rebuff.

(P. 187.)

It is the part of the stupid to be always behind-hand,
The intelligent alone are duly provident:
Where wisdom exists—it matters not that the possessor is a woman:
Where there is the gift of talent—youth or age make no difference.

(P. 195.)

His nature had nothing false or borrowed—why should he change his purpose?
His mind was subject to rule—he could proceed independently:
Alas! that on earth one cannot walk in the straight course!
With no fault of his own, he soon incurred a strange mishap.

CHAPTER IX.—(Page 205.)

What the virtuous designate as slander, the vicious call 'seizing shadows:' but since they cannot deceive heaven, nor hide the light of the sun, they vainly waste their flowery words and smooth lips.——With eyes clear as the wave, she at once saw through the inmost recesses of his thoughts. Alas, that he should abandon what sense he had, and place himself in the situation of a wooden puppet!

(P. 211.)

The confused affairs of the world are full of sudden changes;
But the intercourse of true friendship strengthens by time:

Would you know the intentions of heaven in such rapid vicissitudes?
—It is to try men's hearts like the metal in the crucible.

(P. 214.)

At first they were opposed as water to burning fuel;
They were now as closely blended as varnish and glue:
When his heart had once taken a turn,
It thoroughly understood the path of reason.

(P. 217.)

Though her words were past, they yet lingered on his ear;
Though events were gone by, they still agitated his breast:
Devoted affection might exist like this;
But none equal to this in degree.

CHAPTER X.—(P. 230.)

The thunder's sound, though loud in the expanse, is feared by none but the hollow-hearted; if looking up, one has no cause of self-reproach; if looking down one has no cause of shame; one may sit at ease without fright or alarm. But he who has done ill to others, may expect the bolt to descend on his own head: then it is he resolves not to add to his misdeeds, but to bring them to a conclusion.

(P. 246.)

Do not, because it is the season of peach-blossoms, decide this is a fit union:
Know that the water-birds must pair by mutual consent:
There are abundance of fowl around the river islet;
—But unless birds of a feather, they cannot unite.

APPENDIX TO VOL. II.

CHAPTER XI.—(P. 1.)

SAY not that it did not concern him; his mind and body were entirely engaged in the cause, and he anxiously hastened his succour, lest she should suspect him of remissness. Far from being the victim of passion, he was prompted by the real justice of the case: he was no uncalled-for meddler in the question; for unless himself, who would interfere in it?

(P. 8.)

When the whole tree has been ransacked for flowers unsuccessfully,
They at length begin their search about the roots:
Ignorant that the spring bestows its favours in another quarter,
The trouble of the bees and butterflies is all in vain.

(P. 14.)

Though small the heart that is warm in another's cause,
It is capable of containing innumerable thoughts:
Unable to attain to a place of rest,
It is occupied incessantly in anxious cogitations.

CHAPTER XII.—(P. 26.)

The witless cur would fain take hold of the tiger's beard on the footing of an acquaintance; just as though the shrimp should attempt to be familiar with the dragon. When discomfited, they find it difficult to retreat from the scrape, and reflect at leisure that their troubles proceeded from no ill-intention of the other party, but were of their own seeking.

(P. 49.)

The hero has abundance of resolution at his command;
The beauty abounds equally in prudence and talent:

They both exert themselves in the cause of friendship,
And every service rendered adds depth to obligation.

(P. 52.)

The criminal court had its laws;—but why be over-tenacious?
With dispassionate eye he viewed the difficulties of the case.

CHAPTER XIII.—(P. 53.)

The occasion of joyful nuptial rites is not a proper one for the display of hatred: in seeking marriage, the hearty concurrence of the other party is important. The rude toils in which he would entangle his prey are very insecure: he relies solely on what he deems the over-powering influence of office. The virtuous sage has fixed principles of conduct: to the important affair of marriage he will hardly fail to give deep consideration. Would they subject his white gem to pollution, he had rather at a single blow reduce it to dust.

(P. 53.)

He came;—because his generous feelings despised the distance;
He went—because his whole heart was bound up in affection:
Say not, that kindred minds have not a mysterious communication;
There was a friend to whom the latent notes of the silent lute were known.

(P. 64.)

Until the carrier-pigeon arrives, the matter rests in suspence;
The tawny hound listens with sidelong ear for the expected sound:
Can it be possible that the flower will not unfold propitiously?
—Does it still closely guard its golden bell?

(P. 68.)

The responsive notes of the water-birds can only be heard by the river islet:
—A suitable union is effected with much deliberation:
If the Three Stars shed not their favourable influence,
It is vain to send a thousand leagues in quest of marriage.

(P. 77.)

The figure of iron and stone is not easily changed:
The properties of cassia and ginger cannot alter:
The man of courage would willingly suffer death,
Rather than endure an act of injustice.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Page 80.)

The dull-eyed and pampered judges were unable to discern the hero, whom they classed with useless characters: they either imprisoned his person under vain pretexts, or by false representations sought his death. ———The leader deemed himself, with all his ability, a lost man. But on the brink of destruction he met with a friend: by his intervention he was enabled to achieve great deeds of merit; and thus proved how the affairs of the empire could proceed.

(P. 89)

When an enmity is first contracted,
The giver of the provocation seeks his own gratification:
But after all the vicissitudes of chance,
When the event arrives, he repents too late his choice.

(P. 91.)

He stops his horse where he evinces his partiality,
He explains from the beginning his wish for the alliance:
Why, and for whom, this earnest diligence?—
It was all for HIM (whom we celebrate.)

(P. 98.)

He came, to see a youth of rare endowments;
He returned, to question the most virtuous of her sex.
The desire to accomplish the marriage of their offspring,
Is the cause of ceaseless anxiety to the parents.

(P. 103.)

The hero places his delight in the pleasures of virtue,
The heroine flies far away from vicious affections:

Over the scrupulous, the old man of the moon resumes his power,
To the strictly moral, the freedom of many appears culpable.

(P. 107.)

Her nature was ardent in the cause of virtue,
Though the softness of her affections was easily influenced
To blend thus the warmth of passion with the rigidness of principle,
Is the perfection of moral excellence.

CHAPTER XV.—(Page 108.)

So excellent a youth, so fair and chaste a damsel, both of them so spirited and accomplished—a flower and a willow that had felt the gentle influence—might have been expected to unite.

But the bride was a heroine, the bridegroom of stedfast mind; they would not take the weaker course: they subsisted on virtue, and formed for themselves an union of their own.

(P. 112.)

The subject of the daughter's fears,
Is the object of the father's hopes:
—Their hopes and fears though various,
Their love and affection were the same.

(P. 117.)

The worthy are not allowed to perfect their good works,
So numerous are the secret plots of the mean and the depraved.
Thus unfathomable are the tempers of men—and truly without a remedy:
Such being the state of human affairs—what is there to be done?

(P. 119.)

While her father's wish was yet undivulged,
The daughter's heart already understood it:
—As when, on the distant approach of spring,
The *Mei* tree puts forth a bud to the south.

(P. 126.)

Two flowers are rare on one stalk—the full moon shines forth but rarely:
Bitterly were they obstructed by the weeds and tangle in their path:

The heart of either must be free from all reproach,
'Ere they contract their virtuous and auspicious union.

(P. 135.)

They were united in form—why was not their union complete?
United or not—they were still tranquil and blest.
He who can appreciate the excellence of their conduct,
May begin to understand the principles of the virtuous sages.

CHAPTER XVI.—(Page 136.)

With her painted face and her pencilled brows, she called herself a beauty: unmindful of the silken thread, and without the authority of the god of marriage, she would effect the union by compulsion.—— She knew not the distance that separates the swallow and the variegated bird: they may meet, but can never pair: the firm composure with which the hero rejected her, blighted with disgrace the spring of the bridal.

(P. 139.)

Their vile plots they will not abandon,
The wicked have fresh villainies in store:
—Say then, when their schemes are all executed,
Who knows but they may all miscarry?

(P. 144.)

Tranquilly bending, clothed in its vest of pale yellow,
The flower preserves in strict seclusion its inviolate sweets:
With faintly opening cup, its fragrance is but half exhaled;
It is like some half-told sorrow, still half undisclosed.
It droops with slender stalk in delicate guise,
While its close petals carry all the aspect of modesty:
Deem not that fear of the chill air prevents it from blowing
—It reserves its beauty to compete with the fairest flowers of Keangnan.

(P. 153.)

Let the fish avoid the scented bait—let the fowl avoid the bow:
—But the loss of his horse gave no concern to Sae-ung;

—The powerful bird, whose wings could bear it beyond the limits of the world,
Was unexpectedly detained by a swallow, in the bridal chamber.

(P. 154.)

In her attire of pearls and gold, she affected a splendid exterior,
But her painted lips were broad as the sea; she had a mountain of a forehead:
The king of the demons, accustomed to such objects, might view her as an ordinary sight,
But she was enough to frighten to death any young bridegroom.

(P. 157.)

When force has reached its limit, it becomes mere weakness,
—Mildness, without yielding, constitutes true firmness:
Would you seek an emblem of mildness and resistance combined,
The watery element affords the fittest illustration.

(P. 160.)

Thus alone and dauntless he walked, all confident in his courage;
Thus reserved and proud towards mortals, he must needs possess high talents;
Courage—as if Tszeloong, the leader, had re-appeared in the world,
Talents—as though Lepïh, the poet, had again been born.

(P. 160.)

One flower combines in itself all the merits of two,
While a closer examination only displays its rare charms:
Would you style it a rosy beauty—it is rich, too, in snowy hues;
Would you call it a pale one—it displays the tints of the morning sky;
It resembles some fair complexion slightly heightened by wine,—
It is like some maiden, risen fresh from sleep, to her morning toilet:
Cease to wonder at the hesitation of the poet's pencil,
The loveliness of the object has dispersed his powers of thought.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Page 162.)

The good and bad of person's characters are generally gathered from the surface,

How few draw their conclusions from the heart and disposition!
The cold or warmth of *their* recesses it is difficult to discover,
—Of *their* sours and sweets, the tongue is no judge:
When the day-dreams of some persons are fairly concluded,
They had better not waste themselves in farther surmises:
Let them only examine the subject minutely and clearly,
And they may know that virtue has its latitude of action.

(P. 163.)

If we inquire into the nature of envy,
It will prove to be the depravity of the heart:
The envious endeavour to frustrate what is good,
And derive from this a secret satisfaction.

(P. 165.)

All declare that when the season of spring is come,
It is the time for every flower to blow;
Who should know that, within these walls,
There is a Mowtan which still reserves its sweets.

(P. 169.)

Providing himself against trouble, while yet at rest,
He easily met it as soon as it arrived:
When slander came, his heart was conscious of innocence;
Assailed by calumny, his face was without a blush.

(P. 175.)

Without adding or diminishing, he made a clear report,
And ascertained with truth the beginning and the end of the affair.
On the one hand he rendered a service to his friend,
On the other he performed his duty to his sovereign.

(P. 178.)

The base are unconscious of their own shame,
And devote themselves to exposing the defects of others:
But when the period of discovery arrives,
The shame all reverts upon themselves.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(P. 191.)

The counsellors, of every description, filled the audience-hall: they were fully versed in what the ritual demands; but to give weight to the relative duties, and illustrate reason, belonged to the emperor himself. —When the sacred intelligence once illumined their case, every slander ceased; and it was known that such surpassing virtues could exist. Cease then to class our work with vulgar and ordinary histories: for it contains the spirit of the ancient classics (the Chuntsew of Confucius).

(P. 199.)

The bright sun was about to shine out,
When a floating cloud suddenly obscured it;
Who knows but the cloud shall be clean scattered,
And the clear blue sky appear as before.

(P. 203.)

The pure gem, until it be cut, still remains a pebble;
The yellow gold, untried, is still suspected to contain sand;
After twice celebrating the marriage feast, they were united the third time;
—Then it was their fragrant name became the boast of countless ages.

(P. 209.)

The fine flower, unblown, exhales no sweets,
The fair gem, unpolished, exhibits no radiance:
—Did not the winter cold once penetrate its stem,
How could the plum blossom emit such fragrance.

(P. 210.)

In vain do the wicked exercise their schemes,
The deeper their plots, the deeper is their misery:

Why not repent, and adopt a worthy course,
Thus commanding the respect of men, and the forbearance of demons.

(P. 211.)

When their marriage had been thrice celebrated, they became united,
And the practice of the relative duties was made manifest.
They had preserved their integrity, all confident in each other,
They had closed the avenues of their hearts, and allowed none to participate:
They had united themselves by virtue, as with the silken cord,*
Propriety had supplied with them the place of the nuptial car, and golden heifers.
Say not that the cause of morality was illustrated but for once
They reflected lustre on it for a thousand autumns (years).

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* See note on Yuĕ-laou, vol. ii. p. 103..

FINIS.

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ERRATA.

Vol. II. page 54, for *ollected*, read *collected*.
— 132, — *resolution*, r. *proposition*.
— 143, — (note) *or*, r. *on*.

REPORT

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE SECOND GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

SUBSCRIBERS

TO THE

ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND,

WITH

THE PROSPECTUS,

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE,

AND

REGULATIONS.

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PROSPECTUS

OF A

Plan for translating and publishing such interesting and valuable Works on Eastern History, Science, and Belles-Lettres, as are still in MS. in the Libraries of the Universities, the British Museum, the East-India House, and in other Collections, in Asia and Africa, as well as in Europe; and for providing Funds for carrying this object into execution.

1. THE extensive and valuable collections of Oriental MSS. which are deposited in public and private libraries in England, have long attracted the attention of the learned of this and other countries; and it has been suggested that some means, offering a reasonable prospect of success, may be devised, by which the public may be put in possession of all that is valuable in Eastern literature, and an opportunity be presented for shewing that Britain is not at present backward in contributing to the advancement of Oriental learning, in which she has long held the foremost rank. The interesting relations, moreover, in which this country stands with the East, affording as they do the best opportunities for carrying such a project into effect, and at the same time promising both to England and its Eastern possessions the most beneficial results, may be mentioned as additional motives for engaging in such an undertaking.

2. The advantages likely to be derived from a more extensive cultivation of Oriental literature in this country may be considered as applicable to Biblical Criticism, Ecclesiastical and General History, Biography, Belles-Lettres, the Arts and Sciences, and Geography.

3. With reference to Biblical Criticism and Ecclesiastical History, we know that the sacred Scriptures, particularly those of the Old Testament, abound in modes of expression, and allusions to customs, in many cases imperfectly understood in Europe, but still prevailing in the East. That light confessedly derived from the Arabic and other sister dialects of the Hebrew, has been thrown on the text of Scripture, by the Rabbinical and other commentators, few will deny; yet volumes on Arabic Grammar, Rhetoric, and the more ancient productions of the Arabian poets, which approach most nearly in style and sentiments to some parts of the Hebrew Bible, still lie in MS. in our libraries, either entirely neglected, or at best accessible to few.

4. In the Syriac language, which approximates still nearer than the Arabic to the Hebrew in its form and modes of expression, there are in our libraries unpublished Grammars and Dictionaries, and even Commentaries on the Scriptures, written by the Bishops and other learned members of the Oriental churches, together with MS. works of the greatest value to Divines, on Ecclesiastical History and Divinity, composed by the fathers of the Syrian and Arabian churches. The collection also of the late Mr. Rich, now placed in the British Museum by the liberality of Parliament, contains perhaps the most valuable MSS. of the Syriac Scriptures now in existence; and it is of the

greatest importance to Biblical criticism that a collation of them should be made and published.

5. Perhaps no people possess more extensive stores of History, Biography, and Polite Literature, than the Arabs and Persians. The accounts which their historical and biographical works contain of their own and the surrounding countries, are necessarily the principal sources from which information can be obtained relative to the history of those regions, and of the extraordinary persons to whom they have given birth. Their histories of the Crusades in particular, which furnish the most authentic details on this interesting subject, will always amuse and instruct the general reader, while they furnish materials of the greatest importance to the historian. In Polite Literature, and especially in works of fiction, they have perhaps never been excelled, and in studying such of their works in Belles-Lettres as have been already printed in any European language, regret must be felt that but few of these books, which are so well calculated to afford us pleasure, have been translated.

6. Whatever may be our present superiority over Asia in the arts and sciences, it cannot be uninteresting to the inquiring mind to recur to the sources from which we derived the first elements of our knowledge. In this respect Asia must be recognized as the elder sister and instructress of Europe; and although the hordes of barbarians, which poured forth like a torrent from her north-western regions, effectually extinguished the light which she at first imparted, yet we are indebted to the Mohammedan courts of Cordova, Grenada, and Seville, for its restoration, as it is to them that Europe owes the rudiments of many of her now highly cultivated arts and sciences.

7. From Asiatic works on the Mathematics and Medicine perhaps much light is not now to be expected. To trace the progress of these sciences, however, under the Caliphat, when science had declined among the Greeks, cannot be uninteresting to the philosopher; and as many of the most celebrated of the Greek authors were translated into Arabic, under the patronage of the court of Bagdad, it is not improbable that some long-lost Greek works may be discovered in an Arabian dress, as was the case with the treatise on Conic Sections by Apollonius Pergæus, brought to Europe by Golius, and translated by Halley.

8. From the mercantile pursuits of the Arabs, foreign countries were explored, and commercial establishments formed by them, at an early period of their history; and it is anticipated that accounts of their travels may be discovered, not less interesting than those of Ibn Batuta, which have been published by the Oriental Translation Committee, or of the two Mohammedans who visited India and China in the ninth century, which were translated and published by the learned Renaudot.

9. But while the literature of the East in general is highly worthy of our notice, that of British India has an especial claim to our regard. The possession of a more intimate acquaintance with the History, Geography, Statistics, Laws, and Usages of that portion of our Empire, must be productive of good both to the governors and the governed; and to procure means for obtaining information on these subjects is one of the principal designs of this Prospectus.

10. The object proposed is, to publish, free of expense to the Authors, translations of the whole or parts of such works in the Oriental languages as the Oriental Translation Committee shall approve. These

translations will sometimes be accompanied by the original texts, and such illustrations as may be considered necessary. By the occasional publication of the original text, it is intended to multiply copies of such works as are scarce, and to furnish students at a moderate expense with correct copies of the best Asiatic works, to which they might not otherwise have access.

11. It is not intended to confine the operations of the Committee to works in the Arabic, Persian, and Syriac languages; it is their intention to translate and publish standard and interesting works in Sanscrit, Chinese, Pali, Cingalese, and Burmese; in the languages of Thibet, Tartary, and Turkey; in the Malayan, and other dialects of the Eastern Archipelago; and in the numerous dialects of Hindustan, and the southern peninsula of India.

12. It cannot be expected that the publication of Oriental texts and translations can be effected to any considerable extent, by the efforts of individuals, for none but a public body can command the funds, or furnish the literary means necessary for such an undertaking. The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, which was instituted for the advancement of Oriental literature, is the only Institution in this country to which the public can look with any prospect of success for the accomplishment of such a project; and the Council of that Society have expressed their willingness to co-operate in the execution of the plan which it is the object of this Prospectus to make known. They have subscribed largely from their funds; have selected a Committee, consisting of individuals well known for their zeal and attainments in Eastern literature, to superintend the editing, translating, and printing of the works that are to be published; and have granted the use of their house for the transaction of the business of the Committee:—thus affording the best proofs of their readiness to promote the proposed object, and the strongest guarantee to the public that such works as may be recommended for publication will be executed in a manner that will render them worthy of the patronage that is now solicited.

13. For the purpose of directing the attention of Scholars to the literature of the East, and encouraging translations, the Oriental Translation Committee will give annually, for such works or portions of works as they may consider deserving of distinction, four rewards in money, in sums of from £50 to £100 each, and four gold medals of the value of twenty guineas each, inscribed with the names of the individuals to whom they are presented. Translators whose works are approved, will be entitled to either description of reward, unless they expressly limit their views to the medals. The rewards and medals will be conferred at the Annual Meeting; and success on one occasion will not disqualify for receiving rewards or medals at future anniversaries. Any Member of the Committee who sends a work for approval, whether with a view to obtaining a reward or medal, or merely to have it printed at the Committee's expense, is to cease to act on the Committee until a decision is given on his work.

14. The Oriental Translation Committee now appeal to the liberality of the public for such pecuniary aid as will enable it to effect the objects proposed in this Prospectus. The sums contributed will be appropriated exclusively to the execution of the plan above detailed, and the accounts will be examined, and a report made annually to the

Subscribers of the application of the Funds, by an Auditor, who is to be elected by and from the body of the Subscribers. A report of the progress made in translating and printing during the year will also be made to the Subscribers annually, and notices will be given of such works as the Committee may intend to print at the expense of the Funds contributed by the Subscribers.

15. The terms of subscription are, that every individual or institution subscribing Ten Guineas or upwards annually, will be entitled to one large-paper copy of every work translated, printed, and published by the Committee, with the name of the individual or institution subscribing, printed on an ornamented title-page. Individuals or Institutions subscribing Five Guineas annually, will be entitled to a small-paper copy of any of the works published by the Committee, to the amount of their subscription, at half the price paid for them by Non-subscribers. The remaining copies, after twenty-five have been given to the Translator or Editor for presentation, will be disposed of by the Committee in such a manner as they may consider most conducive to their objects, and to the advancement of Oriental literature.

16. The Committee intend to open communications with the Literary Societies, the British Governors and Consuls, and learned individuals in Asia and Africa, for the purpose of procuring scarce and valuable Oriental MSS. They also intend to communicate with the Oriental scholars in this and other countries, for the purpose of bringing to light texts and translations of valuable Oriental works, which may now lie in MS. in public and private libraries; and thus, by every available means, to endeavour to preserve what might otherwise be irrecoverably lost, and to make known original works and translations which might otherwise never meet the public eye.

17. The Committee confidently expect that valuable translations will be obtained from Asia, as they feel assured that many civil and military officers residing there have hitherto been deterred from translating Oriental works solely by their having no opportunity for publishing the fruit of their labours in England. As that opportunity is now offered, it is hoped that they will be stimulated by the desire of improvement in the Asiatic languages, and the prospect of acquiring celebrity in Europe, to make translations, and avail themselves of the means of publication presented in this Prospectus. For the purpose of obtaining Translations and Subscriptions from Asia, learned men in India, Ceylon, Penang, &c. will be invited to form themselves into Corresponding Committees.

18. The willingness already evinced to further this design, induces the Committee to entertain the most lively hopes of success. From the list of distinguished names prefixed and appended to this Prospectus they have the greatest encouragement to proceed, and they have every reason to expect that the execution of the plan will be materially assisted by the British Universities.

19. It is requested that those individuals who are willing to become subscribers to the Oriental Translation Fund will send their names and addresses to the Secretary, Mr. WILLIAM HUTTMANN, at the house of the Royal Asiatic Society, No. 14, Grafton-street, Bond-street, London; and that they will inform him where their subscriptions will be paid. Subscriptions will also be received by the Corresponding Committees in Asia.

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SECOND REPORT

OF THE

ORIENTAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEE,

PRESENTED TO THE

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND

ON THE

30th of MAY, 1829.

THE Members of the Oriental Translation Committee, in meeting for the second time the Members of the Royal Family, and the Nobility and Gentlemen who have subscribed funds for the translation and printing of interesting Oriental works, feel bound to express their thanks for the support which they have continued to receive.

The Committee hope that their labours, since they had the honour to meet the Subscribers, will be considered worthy of the confidence and support they claimed for them last year.

Although the difficulties of a new Institution are considerable, yet they are not now, as last year, under the necessity of pleading the infantile state of the Oriental Translation Fund, as they consider the publication of the five works already printed, proofs of its adolescence, while the progress made in printing several others, evinces a steady and promising growth towards the vigour and energy of manhood.

The Committee had the honour, at the last anniversary, of announcing to the Subscribers that they had written to the Indian Presidencies, proposing the establishment of Corresponding Oriental Translation Committees; and they have the pleasure of informing this Meeting, that efficient Corresponding Committees have been formed at Calcutta and Madras, and that they hope ere long to receive interesting communications from them.

It is most gratifying to the Committee to find that the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, which was the parent of modern Oriental literature, in the spirit by which it has always been actuated, has expressed its approbation of the objects of the Institution, and promised an annual subscription towards its support. It has also kindly and judiciously named Sir C. T. Metcalfe, Bart. and F. Halliday, Esq. to be the President and Secretary of its Corresponding Committee.

At Madras, the zealous manner in which the Right Honourable Stephen Rumbold Lushington, the Governor, has aided our cause, by the establishment of an Auxiliary Society, is in the highest degree satisfactory; and the appointment of the Venerable Archdeacon

Robinson to be its President, and Mr. Lushington, Junior, to be its Secretary, may be considered presages of great success.

The absence of Sir John Malcolm from Bombay has prevented any definitive arrangement being made there to promote the Subscribers' views; but as it is known, from recent accounts, that he has returned to that Presidency, a communication from him may be daily expected.

The Committee cannot, without feelings of satisfaction, direct the attention of the Subscribers to the first-fruits of their liberality, or pass over in silence the value of the works that have been printed at their expense.

They are much gratified in having had the good fortune, through the kindness of the Rev. Professor Lee, to commence their labours with so curious a work as the Travels of Ibn Batuta. That translation, although only an abridgment of the travels of the Mohammedan Marco Polo of the fourteenth century, gives an accurate idea of the extent and interest of the complete work, which unfortunately is not to be found in any library in Europe. The Committee, however, have strong reason to hope, that their endeavours to obtain a copy of the unabridged original will be crowned with success.

The Autobiography of the Emperor Jahangueir, presented to the Committee by Major Price, the indefatigable author of the "Memoirs of the principal Events in Mohammedan History," can only be compared with the Memoirs of the Emperor Baber. The Committee hope that the Subscribers will agree with them, in considering this book as not less curious than valuable, as it lays open to our view not only the daily occupations of Asiatic princes, but occasionally even their secret thoughts and feelings, and enables us to contrast their actions and opinions with those of the princes of Europe at its most characteristic epochs.

The Chinese tragedy which Mr. Davis has kindly given to the Committee for publication, is distinguished from the "Orphan of Chaou," and the "Heir in Old Age," the only two other dramatic pieces hitherto translated from Chinese into English, by its dignified simplicity, and the entire absence of all degrading and revolting images.

The Travels of Macarius, for which the Subscribers are indebted to the learning of Mr. Belfour, furnishes many curious details relating to the ceremonies of the Greek Church, and accounts of countries that are peculiarly interesting at the present period, through the military operations that are being carried on in the eastern part of Europe.

The valuable Work translated by Dr. Dorn not only gives the history of the mountain tribes of Afghanistan, whose conquests have spread far east and west of that region, but also contains very curious traditions connected with Scripture history.

Besides the works brought before the public by the Committee,

Colonel Briggs, one of its members, has published a complete translation of Ferishta's History of India, which had only been partially translated by Colonel Dow and Captain Jonathan Scott.

The establishment of the Oriental Translation Fund, by ensuring to translators the means of publishing the fruit of their labours, which did not before exist, has encouraged and given new life to Oriental studies throughout the world.

The Committee feel much pleasure in informing the Subscribers, that Horace Hayman Wilson, Esq., the profoundly learned Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, has promised to furnish them with a portion of one of the Vedas in Sanscrit, accompanied by a translation. This is an addition to our literature which has been long and ardently desired by the learned world.

Mr. Walker, of Madras, the able translator of the Cural from the Tamul language, which has prevented its publication by the Committee as was intended, has led us to hope for his valuable assistance; and Lieutenant Rowlandson, the Secretary to the College of that Presidency, has offered to translate any standard work from the Arabic or Persian.

The Rev. E. Hoole, who is about to return to Madras, has obligingly offered, on his arrival, to send to the Committee some interesting translations from the Tamul; and the Rev. Mr. Beighton, of Prince of Wales' Island, has offered to translate from the Malayan any work the Committee may select.

The circulation of the Institution's Prospectus on the Continent has excited great attention to its objects, and offers of translations have been made by several distinguished Orientalists. Those very eminent Oriental scholars, Klaproth of Paris, Kosegarten of Griefswald, Charmoy of St. Petersburg, Fleischer of Pirna, and Neumann of Munich, have already offered their valuable services; and more offers are expected, as the Committee are in correspondence with several foreign Professors celebrated for their knowledge of Oriental languages.

Reposing unbounded confidence in the talents, application, and acquirements of our countrymen, the Committee consider themselves placed above the necessity of indulging national jealousy, and therefore invite contributions from literary bodies and individuals in every quarter of the globe; and are happy in having the opportunity of paying homage to the principal Literary Institutions and Oriental scholars throughout the world, by forwarding to each of them a copy of Ibn Batuta's Travels. This is intended not only to show this Institution's existence, but also to draw attention to the advantages presented to translators in its Prospectus.

The Subscribers, actuated by the same liberal spirit, will be gratified by learning that the number of Oriental scholars on the Continent is rapidly increasing. The knowledge of the establishment of the

Oriental Translation Fund has even extended beyond the eastern limits of Europe, and a native of Persia has undertaken to translate the History of the Khans of the Crimea under its auspices. This circumstance is doubly interesting, from being connected with some curious facts in his history, and from that gentleman's having learnt our language, although he has never been within 2,500 miles of our shores. His father was for many years chief Cadi of Derbend, but falling under the displeasure of the Russian government in 1822, he was, with many other nobles, banished to Astrachan. The son, Mirza Alexander Kazem Beg, followed his aged parent into exile, and being a celebrated Arabic scholar, was engaged by the English Missionaries there to give lessons in that language, and assist in translating the Sacred Scriptures. Here a new scene opened to him, for having an inquiring mind, and being a zealous Mussulman, he resolved to examine thoroughly the doctrines of Christianity, and if possible to refute them. For this purpose he studied Hebrew, and read a great part of the Old Testament, carefully comparing it with the Koran. These researches, however, produced an effect very different from what he had anticipated, for in a few months he declared that the faith of the Franks was the true faith, and announced his intention of embracing it. His father, hearing of his apostacy, was much shocked, and threatened to put him to death, in obedience to the dictates of the Koran. He imprisoned him for several days, and it is probable that, had not the police interfered, he would have carried his threat into execution; but the Mirza was taken to the Russian Archbishop, and by him consigned to the care of the English Missionaries, by whom he was soon afterwards baptized. He remained with them till the end of 1825, when he was ordered to go to Omsk in Siberia, as professor of Oriental languages. On his way to that place he was attacked with illness at Casan, where having been introduced to the Professors at the University, he obtained the Emperor's permission to remain.

The Committee now incidentally notice a fact which, it is thought, will be interesting to the admirers of the early Greek historians. Through the residence in this country of Mirza Mohammed Ibrahim, a Persian gentleman who is attached to the East-India College, the earliest accounts Europe received of his country, and the dynasty which was overthrown by Alexander, are, after the lapse of twenty-two centuries, likely to be given back to its present occupiers in their vernacular tongue, as he has considerably advanced in the translation o Herodotus into Persian from an English version. His work, when finished, however the egotism of the Greeks may wound the vanity of the Persians, will be a noble and unique present to his sovereign and his country.

At the suggestion of Mr. Salamé, that the state of the Arabic type in this country required consideration, a sub Committee consisting of

Sir W. Ouseley, F. C. Belfour, Esq., the Rev. H. D. Leeves, and A. Salamé, Esq. were appointed to examine it, and propose such improvements as they might consider necessary. It is the present intention of the Committee that the improved fount shall be made in imitation of that lately cast by the enlightend Ali Pacha for his press at Cairo.

This establishment was formed for the dissemination among his army and navy of details illustrative of the new systems he has borrowed from Europe. In aid of his military views, works have been printed there for the instruction of his troops, the regulation of the infantry, and canons for their conduct in war: while a treatise on ship-building, and instructions to sailors, are intended to improve the maritime orce of his empire. To these are to be added, for both services, a treatise on artillery, and a laudatory work on war.

Although the Pacha's primary object in establishing the press was the diffusion of military knowledge, his Highness has not neglected scientific subjects, those connected with commerce, or the belles-Lettres. Several works on geometry, astronomy, surgery, and grammar, have been printed; and the publication of Sadi's Gulistan, the Pend-Nameh of Ferid-addin Attar, and an Arabic Anthology, display his taste for general literature. His Highness also intends printing the great work of Makrizi, as being illustrative of the history and statistics of the country he so ably governs.

The translation of a large portion of the last named work would have been in the hands of the Subscribers before this time, had it not been prevented by Mr. Salamé's illness.

The Committee have the pleasure of submitting to the Subscribers specimens of the Institution's medal, and hope that the subject it represents will be considered appropriate, and that the medal generally will receive the approbation of the Meeting, and be reckoned worthy of the acceptance of Oriental scholars.

The expense of sinking the die is sixty guineas; and as it was found to be necessary to make the medal larger than was originally intended, its value at present, including the expense of striking, is twenty guineas.

The Committee, on being informed of the increased expenditure of the Royal Asiatic Society, arising from their augmented exertions and extended views, have considered it right to relinquish, for a time, that Society's annual subscription of one hundred guineas, in the expectation that when the Society's finances improve, the payment of the subscription will be resumed.

It affords the Committee much gratification to report, that besides the Asiatic Society of Bengal, whose having subscribed to the Oriental Translation Fund has been already noticed, the following thirty-six new subscriptions have been received since the last anniversary, *viz.*

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge.
His Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans.
His Highness Prince de Lieven.
His Grace the Duke of Somerset.
The Right Hon. the Earl of Hardwicke.
The Right Hon. the Earl Amherst.
The Right Hon. Lord Ellenborough.
The Hon. George Agar Ellis, M.P.
Sir James Scarlett, M.P.
The Imperial University of Casan.
The Royal Library, Munich.
The Royal College of Surgeons.
The Principal and Fellows of Brazen-nose College, Oxford.
The Library of Christ-Church College, Oxford.
The Traveller's Society.
The Athenæum.
The Oriental Club.
The Dean and Chapter of Ely.
The Methodist Missionary Society.
Francis Baring, Esq. M.P.
The Rev. H. Coddington.
R. Gregory, Esq.
A. Hamilton, Esq.
G. Higgins, Esq.
The Rev. Dr. Knatchbull.
D. Pollock, Esq.
The Rev. E. B. Pusey.
Philip Pusey, Esq.
R. Simmons, Esq.
William Sotheby, Esq.
A. Spottiswoode, Esq. M.P.
Major Gen. J. H. Symons.
R. J. Thomson, Esq.
Colonel Tod.
George Vivian, Esq.; and
W. Williams, Esq.

The Committee have now the honour of laying before the Subscribers an abstract of the receipts and expenditure of the Institution for the year 1828, and of reporting that the balance at present in the Treasurer's hands is £1,248. 9*s*. 11*d*.

The lamented death of Sir Hutton Cooper having left the Auditorship of the Oriental Translation Fund vacant, Mr. Morritt has kindly consented to accept it, and his appointment will be proposed to you this day for confirmation.

Experience having suggested some alterations in the Regulations of

the Institution, the amended rules will be proposed to you, for adoption if approved.

It is now the agreeable duty of the Committee to solicit your attention to an account of the works which they have produced within sixteen months of their appointment.

The Subscribers have already received Ibn Batuta's Travels, the Autobiography of the Emperor Jahangueir, a Chinese tragedy, the first part of the Travels of Macarius, and the first volume of the History of the Afghans: and the Committee feel great pleasure in stating that some progress has been made in printing a Chinese Romance, translated by Mr. Davis; the Adventures of Hatim Taï, translated by Mr. Forbes; the History of the Maritime Wars of the Turks, by Mr. Mitchell; the Geography of Idrisi, by the Rev. Mr. Renouard; and Ibn Khallican's Lives of the Illustrious, and an Arabic System of Algebra, by Dr. Rosen, the highly distinguished Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of London. Portions of these works now lie on the table, and they will be forwarded to the Subscribers as the printing of each of them is finished.

The very curious Arabic work on Algebra, mentioned above, besides possessing considerable intrinsic value, greatly illustrates the history of the Mathematics. It has been supposed that the Italians received their algebra from the Arabs, and that the Arabs received their algebraical knowledge from India, as its existence there at an early period is proved in the introduction to Mr. Colebrooke's translation of a system of algebra from the Sanscrit language. The translation of the *Mukhtasar fi hisab el-jebr wa'l mokabeleh*, i. e. a compendium on calculating by reduction and equation, furnishes strong corroboration of the opinion, that the Arabian Court of Bagdad was the medium through which the knowledge of algebra was conveyed from India to Europe. In illustration of this remark, it may be mentioned that one of the formulæ given in the above-named work for finding the circumference of the circle by means of its diameter, is to multiply the latter by $\frac{62830}{20000}$, which is reducible to $\frac{3927}{1250}$, the proportion given in the Sanscrit work Lilavati.

Besides the works in the press, and those offered by Messrs. Beighton, Fleischer, Hoole, Kosegarten, Rowlandson, Walker, Wilson, &c. the following are in the course of translation, *viz.*

The Travels of Macarius, Part II., by Mr. Belfour.

A Singhalese Masque and System of Demonology, by the Rev. John Callaway.

The History of Koordistan, and the History of Mazenderan, by Professor Charmoy.

A Sanscrit System of Metaphysical Philosophy, by Mr. Colebrooke.

The History of the Afghans, Part II., by Dr. Dorn.

Syrian Annals and Chronology, by the Rev. Mr. Forshall.

Travels in Turkey, by Herrn von Hammer.

The History of Turkey, by the Rev. Dr. Henderson.

The History of the Crimea, by Mirza Alexander Kazem Beg.

A Persian System of Ethics, by the Rev. Mr. Keene.

The History of Georgia and a Description of Tibet, by Monsieur Jules de Klaproth.

A Collation of Syriac Biblical MSS., and a History of the Berbers, by the Rev. Professor Lee.

A History of Armenia, by Professor Neumann.

The Apostolical Canons of the Ethiopic Church, by Mr. Platt.

The Bustan of Sadi, by Mr. Ross.

The History of Egypt, by M. Salamé.

The Early History of Persia, by Mr. Shea; and

The Autobiography of the Emperor Tamerlane, by Major Stewart.

Making a total of five works printed, six in the press, and twenty-eight in progress of translation or promised.

The most pleasing part of the Committee's duty still remains to be performed: that is, mentioning those gentlemen whose exertions, talents, and acquirements, have been employed in promoting the objects of the Institution as Translators, and who are considered deserving of the rewards given by the Subscribers.

It has been considered necessary to make some regulations for the distribution of those rewards; but although these regulations may be considered general principles after being confirmed by this Meeting, the Committee wish, for the promotion of the Institution's views, to have it in their power to suggest to the Subscribers such alterations and exceptions as peculiar circumstances may render necessary.

It is proposed that when rewards are given, it shall be for complete works, or for single volumes, or parts of about two hundred pages, if they consist of more than one volume. The medals, although they may be voted at the annual meeting, are not to be delivered to the gentlemen to whom they are voted until the above portion of the works for which they are given is in the Subscribers' hands; but the pecuniary rewards, after being voted at the anniversary meeting, shall be paid to the Translators at the Committee's discretion.

Although all the works that are published or in progress merit tokens of the Subscribers' approbation, yet some translations having been sent by well-known veterans in Oriental literature, rather to assist in establishing the fame of an infant institution than with the view of raising their reputation, which nothing that this Institution can bestow could increase, has rendered a public homage to their talents unnecessary. Another contributor (the Rev. Professor Lee), highly distinguished by his Oriental acquirements, has declined taking from the Institution those funds which are devoted to objects in which he takes so great an interest, and which his labours so materially promote. Some of the translations, also, are so small, although it is

hoped that they are the precursors of larger works, that it would be incompatible with the Institution's means to compensate them in a manner that would be worthy of the Translators' acceptance. The Committee have drawn no invidious distinctions, and they trust that the publication of the works of Translators will sufficiently prove the high estimation in which they are held.

While these circumstances have rendered the presentation of the Institution's rewards unnecessary in several instances, the Committee have great satisfaction in recommending the presentation of two rewards, of fifty pounds each in money, and two medals, to four of the gentlemen who have furnished translations. Mr. Belfour, the translator of the Travels of Macarius, and Mr. Mitchell, the translator of the History of the Maritime Wars of the Turks, are recommended for the first; and Drs. Dorn and Rosen, for the second kind of reward: and as Dr. Rosen is going out of England, although only for a short time, it is proposed that this mark of your approbation should be now placed in his permanent possession, although the Arabic Algebra is not yet through the press.

The Committee have received an intimation from the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society, of their intention to alter that Society's anniversary from the 15th of March to the 7th of June, the day on which His Majesty was graciously pleased to become its Patron. The Council also requested the Committee to propose to this Meeting, that the annual meeting of the Subscribers to the Oriental Translation Fund should in future be held on the 7th of June, as holding the two meetings on the same day will, it is anticipated, mutually increase their interest.

The Committee, in concluding the report of their proceedings during the past year, return their cordial thanks to the Subscribers for the confidence that they have placed in them, and which, they trust, has not been unworthily used; and express their hope and belief that at the next anniversary they will have the pleasure of reporting having made still greater progress in the attainment of the objects for which the Institution was established, than they have made during the year that is past.

The Committee cannot close their report without fearlessly predicting, that should they be aided by a continuance of your patronage and support, they will be able to raise this Institution to a level with the most powerful literary societies in Europe.

The Auditor's Report of the Receipts and Disbursements of the ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND, *from January 1 to December 31, 1828.*

RECEIVED.	£.	s.	d.
87 Subscriptions of 10 Guineas each	913	10	0
1 Ditto of 100 ditto	105	0	0
3 Ditto of 20 ditto	63	0	0
4 Ditto of 5 ditto	21	0	0
	£1,102	10	0

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT,
From January 1 to May 20, 1829.

Balance in hand, January 1, 1829	850	4	7
Received since January 1	698	5	0
	£1,548	9	7

Balance in hand, May 20, 1829 ..... £1,248 9 11

PAID.	£.	s.	d.
For Printing	70	9	0
Books	34	9	0
Salary and Transcription	89	18	0
Petty Expenses	57	9	5
	252	5	5
Balance in hand	850	4	7
	£1,102	10	0

Expended, since January 1, 1829	299	19	8
Balance in hand	1,248	9	11
	£1,548	9	7

Audited, May 25, 1829, J. B. S. MORRITT.

LIST OF WORKS

PUBLISHEDBY THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEE,

AND

Sold by J. MURRAY, Albemarle Street; PARBURY, ALLEN, & Co., Leadenhall Street; and HOWELL and Co., Holborn.

1.

THE TRAVELS OF IBN BATUTA,

Translated from the abridged Arabic Manuscript Copies preserved in the Public Library of Cambridge, with NOTES illustrative of the History Geography, Botany, Antiquities, &c. occurring throughout the Work.

By the Rev. S. LEE, B.D., Professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, &c. &c.

In Quarto; price to Non-Subscribers, £1.

2.

MEMOIRS OF THE EMPEROR JAHANGUEIR,

Written by Himself, and translated from a Persian Manuscript,

By MAJOR DAVID PRICE, of the Bombay Army, &c. &c.

In Quarto; price to Non-Subscribers, 12*s*.

3.

THE TRAVELS OF MACARIUS, PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH,

Written by his attendant Archdeacon, Paul of Aleppo, in Arabic. Part the First. Anatolia, Romelia, and Moldavia.

Translated by F. C. BELFOUR, Esq. A.M. Oxon, &c. &c.

In Quarto; price to Non-Subscribers, 10*s*.

4.

HAN KOONG TSEW, OR, THE SORROWS OF HAN.

A Chinese Tragedy, translated from the Original, with Notes

By JOHN FRANCIS DAVIS, F.R.S., &c.,

In Quarto; price to Non-Subscribers, 5*s*.

5.

HISTORY OF THE AFGHANS.

Translated from the Persian of Neamet Ullah. Part I.

By BERNHARD DORN. Ph.D., &c.

In Quarto; price to Non-Subscribers, 14*s*.

LIST OF WORKS IN THE PRESS.

Yakkun Nattannawa and Kolan Nattannawa; translated by the Rev. John Callaway.

These Singalese poems describe the system of Demonology that is prevalent in Ceylon; and the characters—principally those of malignant spirits—that are assumed by natives of that island in their masquerades.

Hatim Taï; translated by Duncan Forbes, Esq., A.M.

This is a popular Persian romance, which narrates the seven perilous adventures of Hatim, an Arab Chief.

The Tuhfat al Kebar of Kateb Chelebi al Marhoom: translated by James Mitchell, Esq.

This Turkish History contains a detailed account of the maritime wars of the Turks in the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and on the Danube, &c. from the foundation of their empire in Europe to the commencement of 1640.

The great Geographical Work of Idrisi; translated by the Rev. G. C. Renouard, B.D.

This Arabic work was written A.D. 1153, 'to illustrate a large silver globe made for Roger, King of Sicily, and is divided into the seven climates described by the Greek Geographers.

Ibn Khalikan's Lives of Illustrious Men: translated by Dr. F. A. Rosen.

This is an Arabic Biographical Dictionary, arranged alphabetically, of the most celebrated Arabian historians, poets, warriors, &c. who lived in the seven first centuries of the era of Mahommed, A.D. 600 to A.D. 1300.

The Mukhtasar fi hisāb el-jebr wa'l mokābeleh, by Mohammed ben Musa of Khovaresm; translated by Dr. F. A. Rosen.

This is the earliest system of algebra extant in Arabic.

LIST OF TRANSLATIONS PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

Class 1st.—THEOLOGY, ETHICS, and METAPHYSICS.

The Sánc'hya Cáricá; translated by Henry Thomas Colebrooke, Esq.

This Sanscrit work contains in seventy-two stanzas the principles of the Sánc'hya System of Metaphysical Philosophy.

The Akhlak-e-Naseri of Naser-ud-Din of Tus in Bucharia; translated by the Rev. H. G. Keene, A.M.

This Persian system of Ethics is an elaborate composition, formed on Greek models, and is very highly esteemed in Persia.

A Collation of the Syriac MSS. of the New Testament, both Nestorian and Jacobite, that are accessible in England, by the Rev. Professor Lee.

This collation will include the various readings of the Syriac MSS. of the New Testament in the British Museum, and the Libraries at Oxford, Cambridge, &c.

The Didascalia, or Apostolical Constitutions of the Abyssinian Church; translated by T. P. Platt, Esq. A.M.

This ancient Ethiopic work is unknown in Europe, and contains many very curious opinions.

Class 2d.—HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, GEOGRAPHY, and TRAVELS.

The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch, written by his attendant Archdeacon, Paul of Aleppo; translated by F. C. Belfour, Esq., LL.D. Part II.

This Arabic Manuscript, which is of great rarity, describes the Patriarch's journey through Syria, Anatolia, Rumelia, Walachia, Moldavia, and Russia, between the years 1653 and 1660 of the Christian Æra.

The Life of Sheikh Ali, surnamed Hazin, or the Sorrowful, written by himself. Translated from the Persian by F. C. Belfour, Esq., LL.D.

The illustrious poet Sheikh Ali was born at Isphahan, in the year of the Hejra 1103 (A. D. 1692), and by the variety and multiplicity of his travels and adventures, was enabled to furnish a very interesting and curious detail of Autobiographical and Historical Memoirs.

Sheref Nameh; translated by Professor Charmoy.

This is a Persian History of the Dynasties which have governed in Kurdistan, written by Sheref Ibn Shems ud Din, at the close of the sixteenth century.

The History of Mazenderan and Tabaristan; translated by Professor Charmoy.

This is a Persian history of part of the Persian empire, written by Zaher ud Din, and comes down to A.D. 1475.

The Tareki Afghan; translated by Dr. Bernhard Dorn. Part II.

This is a Persian History of the Afghans, who claim to be descended from the Jews. It will be accompanied by an account of the Afghan tribes.

The Annals of Elias, Metropolitan of Nisibis; translated by the Rev. Josiah Forshall, A.M.

This Syriac Chronicle contains chronological tables of the principal dynasties of the world, brief memoirs of the Patriarchs of the Nestorian church, and notices of the most remarkable events in the East, from the birth of our Saviour to the beginning of the eleventh century.

The Ghazavati Bosnah; translated by Charles Frazer, Esq.

This Turkish work was written by Omar Effendi, a native of Bosnia, and contains the history of the wars in that province between the Turks and Austrians, from 1736 to 1739.

The Travels of Evlia Effendi; translated by Herrn von Hammer.

This work contains an account in Turkish, of the travels of Evlia in all parts of the Turkish empire, and in Turkestan, &c. in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Naima's Annals; translated by the Rev. Dr. Henderson.

This Turkish History comprises the period between 1622 nd 1692, and includes accounts of th Turkish invasion of Germany, the sieges of Buda, Vienna, &c.

The Asseba as Syar of Syed Muhammed Reza; translated by Mirza Alexander Kazem Beg.

This is a Turkish History of the Khans of the Crimea, written about A.D. 1740, and contains many interesting particulars relating to Turkey, Russia, Poland, and Germany.

A History of Georgia; translated by Monsieur Jules de Klaproth.

This Georgian History comprehends the period between 1647 and 1757, and will be preceded by Vakhtang's chronicle of events that occurred in Georgia prior to the introduction of Christianity into that country, and a Synopsis of Georgian History from that epoch to the year 1647.

A Description of Tibet; translated by Monsieur Jules de Klaproth.

This will consist of extracts from various Chinese and Mandchu works, forming a complete account of Tibet, and of the Buddha religion, of which it is the principal seat.

Ibn Khaldun's History of the Berbers; translated by the Rev. Professor Lee.

This is a rare and valuable Arabic work, containing an account of the origin, progress, and decline of the dynasties which governed the northern coast of Africa.

The History of Vartan, King of Armenia; translated by Professor Neumann.

This work contains an account of the religious wars between the Persians and Armenians in the sixth century, and many important documents relating to the religion of Zoroaster. It is written in the purest classical Armenian by Elisæus, who was an eye-witness of many of the events he relates.

Makrisi's Khîtat, or History and Statistics of Egypt; translated by Abraham Salamé, Esq.

This Arabic work includes accounts of the conquest of Egypt by the Caliphs, A.D. 640; and of the cities, rivers, ancient and modern inhabitants of Egypt, &c.

Part of Mirkhond's Ruzet-al-Suffa; translated by David Shea, Esq.

The part of this Persian work selected for publication is that which contains the History of Persia from Kaiomurs to the death of Alexander the Great.

The Tuzzuk Timuri; translated by Major Charles Stewart.

This work contains an account of the first forty-seven years of the life of Tamerlane, written by himself in the Jagatean Toorki language, and translated into Persian by Abu taleb Husseyni.

Class 3d.—Belles-Lettres.

Heft Peiker, an historical Romance of Behrám Gúr; translated by the Right Hon. Sir Gore Ouseley, Bart.

From the Persian of Nizámi of Ganjah, containing the romantic history of Behrám, the Vth. of the Sassanian dynasty of Persian Kings.

Meher va Mushteri; translated by the Right Hon. Sir Gore Ouseley, Bart.

This Persian Poem, of which an abridgment will be published, was composed by Muhammed Assár, and celebrates the friendship and adventures of Meher and Mushteri, the sons of King Shapur and his grand Vizier.

The Bustan of Sadi; translated by James Ross, Esq., A.M.

This is a much-admired Persian Poem, consisting of Tales, &c. illustrative of moral duties.

REGULATIONS

FOR

THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEE.

1st. THE Committee which is attached to the Royal Asiatic Society, for the purpose of selecting and superintending the translation and printing of Oriental works, is to be called the "Oriental Translation Committee."

2d. The object of the Committee is to publish, free of expense to the authors, translations of the whole or parts of works in the Oriental languages, accompanied occasionally by the original texts, and such illustrations as may be considered necessary. These translations are to be generally printed in English, but in very peculiar cases may be printed in Latin or French.

3d. The Committee is empowered to add to its number, to purchase Oriental MSS. or printed books, to present copies of the works printed at the expense of the Oriental Translation Fund to learned Societies and individuals, and to adopt all the means that it may consider to be necessary for promoting the objects for which it was appointed. No payment, however, exceeding twenty-five pounds, is to be made until approved at two successive Meetings of the Committee.

4th. The Meetings of the Committee will be held as often as the Chairman or Secretary, or any two other Members of it, signing a requisition for that purpose, deem it necessary. All the Members of the Committee resident within one hundred miles of London, are to be summoned to attend each of its Meetings; and five Members, including the Chairman or a Deputy Chairman, and the Secretary, are to constitute a quorum.

5th. The Secretary is charged generally with the business of the Committee, and is to record all the votes of the Committee in a Minute-Book, which every Subscriber has the right of inspecting on application to him.

6th. For the purpose of directing the attention of scholars to the literature of the East, and encouraging translations, the Committee is empowered to give annually, for such works as it may consider deserving of distinction, four rewards in money, in sums of from £50 to £100

each, and four gold medals of the value of twenty guineas each, inscribed with the names of the individuals to whom, and the titles of the translations for which, they are presented. Any Member of the Committee who sends a work for approval, whether to obtain a reward or medal, or merely to have it printed at the expense of the Oriental Translation Fund, is to cease to act on the Committee until the adoption or rejection of his work is decided on.

7th. No work, although prepared for the press at the expense of the Oriental Translation Fund, is to be printed, until the imprimatur of the Chairman or a Deputy Chairman, and at least eight Members of the Committee, is obtained. The Translators of such works as are printed by the Committee are entitled to twenty-five copies of their Translations for presentation.

8th. Every individual or institution subscribing ten guineas or upwards annually to the Oriental Translation Fund, will be entitled to one fine-paper copy of every work printed by the Committee, with the name of the individual or institution subscribing printed on an ornamented title-page. Individuals or institutions subscribing five guineas annually, will be entitled to common-paper copies of any of the works published by the Committee, to the amount of their subscriptions, at half the price paid for them by Non-subscribers.

9th. A General Meeting, to which every Subscriber and Member of the Committee resident in the United Kingdom will be summoned, will be held annually on the 7th of June, or, should that day fall on a Sunday, on the preceding Saturday. At that meeting Regulations may be proposed or rescinded; the Auditor will report the receipts and disbursements of the past year; and the Secretary report the progress made in the works that have been commenced, and give an account of those that are proposed for publication in the following year. A copy of each of these Reports will be sent to every Subscriber.—A Special General Meeting shall be convened by the Secretary at any time it is required in writing by nine Subscribers, the requisition stating the subject that is to be proposed for consideration.

REPORT

OF

THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

SECOND GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

SUBSCRIBERS TO THE ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND.

At a MEETING *of the* SUBSCRIBERS *to the* ORIENTAL TRANSLATION FUND, *held on Saturday, the 30th of May* 1829, *at the house of the Royal Asiatic Society,*

His Royal Highness the Duke of SUSSEX in the Chair.

Expressions of regret for not being able to attend the Meeting were communicated from His Royal Highness the Duke of ORLEANS, His Excellency Prince de POLIGNAC, His Grace the Duke of RICHMOND, the Right Honourable the Earl of CASSILIS, the Right Honourable Lord Viscount MELVILLE, the Right Honourable Lord BEXLEY, &c.

The Minutes of the last Anniversary Meeting were read by the Secretary, and confirmed.

The Right Honourable Sir GORE OUSELEY, Bart., Chairman of the Oriental Translation Committee, having read the Report of the Committee's Proceedings since the last Anniversary, and the Auditor having presented an account of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Oriental Translation Fund for the past year;

It was moved by the Most Noble the Marquis of BUTE, seconded by the Right Honourable Lord SELSEY, and

Resolved Unanimously,

"THAT the Report and Account be approved and printed."

The amended body of Regulations for the Committee having been read;

It was moved by the Right Honourable the Earl AMHERST, seconded by Admiral Sir C. M. POLE, Bart., G.C.B., and

Resolved Unanimously,

"THAT the amended Regulations for the Oriental Translation Committee be adopted."

His Royal Highness then presented two of the Institution's Medals to Professors DORN and ROSEN, accompanied by appropriate addresses to those Gentlemen.

His Royal Highness having left the Chair, it was moved by the Right Honourable the Earl of CARLISLE, seconded by the Right Honourable the EARL SPENCER, and

Resolved Unanimously,

"THAT the warmest thanks of this Meeting be given to his "Royal Highness the Duke of SUSSEX, for his able and condescending conduct in the Chair."

WILLIAM HUTTMANN,
Secretary.

Royal Asiatic Society's House,
14, *Grafton Street, Bond Street,*
London, July 6, 1829.

THE Oriental Translation Committee have the highest gratification in informing the Subscribers to the Oriental Translation Fund, that on the five works that have been printed at their expense being tendered for the King's acceptance, His Majesty was most graciously pleased to command, that, for the furtherance of Oriental learning, two royal gold medals of the value of 25 guineas each, should be given annually, for the two best translations from the Eastern languages that may be presented to the Oriental Translation Committee.

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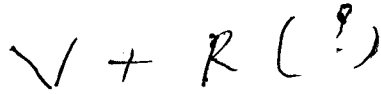

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